CHAPTER 2.0
Description of Alternatives

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes alternatives, including the Proposed Plan and CDCA Plan Amendment, to address the various combinations of public land uses, recreation, and resource management practices within the Planning Area. This chapter is organized by resources and uses rather than by alternatives, so that readers may more easily compare how proposed management under each of the alternatives may affect a particular resource or resource use under BLM's administration.

Throughout this chapter, information is displayed at a broad overview level, which then moves to the specific. The planning document is presented first by resource, the presence or abundance of which may vary from location to location within the Planning Area. Two different types of land use plan decisions are presented for each resource under all alternatives: Goals and Objectives, and Management Actions.

- Goals and Objectives are the desired outcomes for resource conditions and resource uses.

- Management Actions are actions, allowable uses, and land designations that BLM would implement under a given alternative to achieve the goals and objectives for a particular resource or resource use.

Additional decisions that provide a better understanding of decisions required in the program guidance include Rangeland Standards and Guidelines, Land Tenure Adjustment, and Special Designations. These decisions must also support the goals outlined in the Goals and Objectives (see Chapter 1 for list of differences between land use plan and implementation decisions).

The Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan amendment will address transportation and access, and will designate sections of the Planning Area as open, closed, and limited with a statement of the limitations for OHV recreation. Decisions such as route designation and vending area designation are not planning-level decisions, but rather are implementation-level decisions. Individual routes will be designated as open, closed, and limited applying the criteria of 43 CFR 8364.1.

Following is a brief general description of each of the eight alternatives. Detailed management prescriptions are presented under the applicable program headings. The differences between alternatives are displayed in the tables presented below and maps.

Any elements not shown in tables or maps are common to all of the alternatives. Where appropriate, mitigation measures have been incorporated into the alternatives to reduce the impacts of those alternatives.

2.2 General Description of Each Alternative

The following are summaries of the eight alternatives considered and analyzed in the Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment and Final EIS. Additional detail for each alternative can be found below by resource and program in Section 2.3—Comparison of Alternatives.

Alternative 1 (No Action) describes the management conditions prescribed in the 1987 RAMP for the Planning Area. Alternative 1 provides an opportunity to compare the 1987 RAMP-prescribed management with various strategies suggested to be analyzed for future management. The CDCA Plan would not be amended under this alternative because it already has been so amended by the 1987 RAMP. Multiple use classes and OHV area designations would remain the same as in the 1987 RAMP. Alternative 1 represents the No Action alternative required by NEPA and would reaffirm current management under the 1987 RAMP. Alternative A does not take into account the court-ordered Administrative Closures. Management of recreation opportunities, special status species habitat, and other resources would be maintained at existing levels prior to the 2000 closure order. This alternative would not modify allowable uses to address emerging issues on public lands. The No Action Alternative does not to take into account the temporary closure in the ISD SRMA, because the temporary closure is an administrative action (made pursuant to 43 CFR subpart 8341) and not a formal land use decision approved pursuant to 43 CFR 1610.

The No Action Alternative reflects current management decisions in the existing land use plan and does not include actions that would constitute an amendment to the existing land use plan. The No Action Alternative establishes a baseline for analysis of impacts to the human environment from a range of alternatives for management of public lands. Therefore, the no action alternative has to consider the effects of current management decisions (i.e., those approved within an existing land use plan) rather than a temporary closure, because management of public lands under a temporary closure substantially alters the baseline for analysis. In other words, the trajectory for impacts to the human environment is much different if BLM compares other reasonable alternatives to a management of public lands under a closure order instead of existing land use decisions.

Furthermore, using this approach to define the No Action Alternative provides the public and BLM officials with a better understanding of the current management decisions that have contributed to the existing conditions of public land resources and a better baseline

for analysis of impacts from different management alternatives that meet the purpose and need for a land use plan amendment/revision.

Alternative 2 is the continuation of the current management direction in the 1987 RAMP with changes made to comply with laws, policies, and management measures instituted since the 1987 RAMP was approved, including the designation of the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness in 1994. This alternative also includes some administrative actions in the Planning Area since the 1987 RAMP was approved, including the interim Administrative Closures of OHV recreation areas. The court-mandated Administrative Closures would be maintained and adopted by BLM under this alternative. Multiple use classes and OHV area designations would remain the same as currently designated. Alternative 2 provides an opportunity to compare the current management with various strategies suggested to be analyzed for future management.

The CEQ regulations require EISs to describe a No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative provides a useful baseline for comparison of environmental effects (BLM 2005a, Section 6.6.2). In cases of land management plans, "no action" is "no change" from current management direction or level of management intensity (CEQ 40 Frequently Asked Questions, Question 3). Although the 2003 RAMP was vacated by the District Court, present management of the Planning Area is conducted based on updates developed for the 2003 RAMP and compliance with policies and management measures instituted in the 1987 RAMP. Alternative 2 also includes the court-mandated interim Administrative Closures. Alternative 2 most closely reflects management on the ground. When comparing the impacts of alternatives in Chapter 4, Alternative 2 is used as a baseline, against which the impacts of other alternatives can be compared.

Alternative 3 generally places emphasis on preservation of the Planning Area's natural, biological, and cultural resources through limited public use. It focuses on natural processes and other unobtrusive methods for natural resource use and management. It proposes fewer motorized and developed recreation opportunities than other alternatives. Alternative 3 would result in a CDCA Plan amendment that addresses MUCs; establishes VRM Classes; manages lands with wilderness characteristics; updates ACECs; establishes recreation area management zones; designates exclusion or avoidance areas for camping and land use authorizations; adjusts land tenure; designates all BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area as open, closed, or limited to motorized use; and replaces the NECO and WECO decisions in the Planning Area.

Alternative 4 emphasizes opportunities for visitors to experience natural, biological, and cultural resource values of the Planning Area. It emphasizes a combination of natural processes and active management techniques for recreation and use management. The alternative includes management decisions that would provide a balance of multiple uses. Alternative 4 identifies a higher level of preservation and a lower level of motorized recreation, recreation opportunities, and renewable development than Alternatives 5 and

6. Alternative 4 does not provide for management of lands with wilderness characteristics, which distinguishes it from Alternative 3. Alternative 4 would result in a CDCA Plan amendment that addresses MUCs; establishes VRM Classes; updates ACECs; establishes recreation area management zones; designates exclusion or avoidance areas for camping and land use authorizations; adjusts land tenure; designates all BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area as open, closed, or limited to motorized use; and replaces the NECO and WECO decisions in the Planning Area.

Alternative 5 provides visitors with opportunities to experience natural, biological, and cultural resource values of the Planning Area. It emphasizes a combination of natural processes and active management techniques for recreation and use management. The alternative includes management decisions that would provide a balance of multiple uses. Alternative 5 identifies a more moderate level of preservation than Alternative 4 and a more moderate level of motorized recreation, recreation opportunities, and renewable development than Alternative 6. Alternative 5 would result in a CDCA Plan amendment that addresses MUCs; establishes VRM Classes; updates ACECs; establishes recreation area management zones; designates exclusion or avoidance areas for camping and land use authorizations; adjusts land tenure; designates all BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area as open, closed, or limited to motorized use; and replaces the NECO and WECO decisions in the Planning Area. In contrast to Alternative 3, Alternative 5 would not provide for management of lands with wilderness characteristics.

Alternative 6 provides visitors with opportunities to experience natural, biological, and cultural resource values of the Planning Area. It emphasizes a combination of natural processes and active management techniques for recreation and use management. The alternative includes management decisions that would provide a balance of multiple uses. Alternative 6 identifies a lower level of preservation than Alternative 4 and a higher level of motorized recreation, recreation opportunities, and renewable development than Alternative 5. Alternative 6 would result in a CDCA Plan amendment that addresses MUCs; establishes VRM Classes; updates ACECs; establishes recreation area management zones; designates exclusion or avoidance areas for camping and land use authorizations; adjusts land tenure; and designates all BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area as open, closed, or limited to motorized use; and replaces the NECO and WECO plan decisions in the Planning Area.

Alternative 7 generally places an emphasis on consumer-driven uses and the widest array of uses, such as renewable energy, transportation, and utility rights-of-way (ROWs), and enhanced recreational opportunities (including motorized recreation). It identifies areas most appropriate for these various uses. It places a greater emphasis on developed and motorized recreation opportunities and a lesser emphasis on remote settings and primitive recreation. Alternative 7 would result in a CDCA Plan amendment

that addresses MUCs; establishes VRM Classes; updates ACECs; establishes recreation area management zones; designates exclusion or avoidance areas for camping and land use authorizations; adjusts land tenure; designates all BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area as open, closed, or limited to motorized use; and replaces the NECO and WECO decisions in the Planning Area.

Alternative 8 (Proposed Plan and CDCA Plan Amendment; Preferred Alternative) provides for management of each resource and resource use by establishing a balance between authorized resource use, and the protection and long-term sustainability of sensitive resources. It allows visitation and development within the Planning Area, while ensuring that resource protection is not compromised in accordance with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield as mandated by FLPMA. The proposed decisions under this alternative are a combination of features from several of the other alternatives. Alternative 8 would result in a CDCA Plan amendment that addresses MUCs; establishes VRM Classes; updates ACECs; establishes recreation area management zones; designates exclusion or avoidance areas for camping and land use authorizations; adjusts land tenure; designates all BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area as open, closed, or limited to motorized use; and replaces the NECO and WECO decisions in the Planning Area.

2.3 Comparison of Alternatives

Elements of alternatives that vary are presented in table and map format. All other elements that are discussed in the text are common to all alternatives, unless otherwise indicated. Table 2-1 provides a summary of all management actions and allocations by alternative.

2.3.1 Multiple Use Classes

The 25 million-acre CDCA was established by Congress in 1976 through the FLPMA (43 USC 1781[a]). The CDCA Plan was completed in 1980 and provides guidance for the 11 million acres of public lands within the CDCA administered by the BLM.

The CDCA Plan is a comprehensive, long-range plan with goals and specific actions for the management, use, development, and protection of the resources and public lands within the CDCA. The plan is based on the concepts of multiple use, sustained yield, and maintenance of environmental quality. All of the public lands in the CDCA under BLM management, including the ISD, have been designated geographically into four multiple-use classes. The classification was based on the sensitivity of resources and kinds of uses that may be allowed for the each geographic area.

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Vegetation								
Prohibit removal of native standing trees, alive or dead, with the exception of fire management, public health and safety, or disease control.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Classify microphyll woodlands as avoidance areas[1] for all commercial and non-commercial surface-disturbing activities.				X	X	X		X
Classify microphyll woodlands as exclusion areas[1] for all commercial and non-commercial surface-disturbing activities.			X					
Exclude microphyll woodlands south of Wash 20 from OHV recreation.			X	X	X			
Open a portion of microphyll woodlands south of Wash 20 to OHV recreation.	X	X				X	X	
Allow OHV recreation and prohibit camping in microphyll woodlands south of Wash 33 and north of Wash 70.								X
Vegetative Use Authorization								
Prohibit removal of native standing trees alive or dead with the exception of fire management, public health and safety, or disease control.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Allow collection of dead and downed wood in the microphyll woodlands.		X		X	X	X	X	
Prohibit collection of dead and downed wood within the ISD SRMA.			X					X

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Wildlife								
Maintain current wildlife guzzlers through CDFG and volunteer contributions. Consider construction of new wildlife guzzlers on a case-by-case basis, in coordination with CDFG.		X		X	X	X	X	X
Maintain current wildlife guzzlers through CDFG and volunteer contributions. No construction of new wildlife waters.			X					
Special Status Species								
Limit motorized recreation (within corridors or routes) within habitat for the Mojave population of desert tortoise west of the UPRR tracks.				X				
Prohibit camping within desert tortoise habitat.			X					
Allow camping within designated areas of desert tortoise habitat.				X				X
Open desert tortoise habitat to all motorized recreation.							X	
Limit motorized recreation (corridors or routes) within BLM sensitive species habitat west of the UPRR tracks.				X				
Prohibit camping within BLM sensitive species habitat.			X					
Allow camping in designated areas within BLM sensitive species habitat.				X				X
Open BLM sensitive species habitat to all motorized recreation.							X	

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Special Status Species (cont.)								
Prohibit commercial or personal collection of special status species. Allow research collection by permit only.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Follow prescriptions in recovery plans for federally listed species.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Peirson's Milk-vetch								
Provide for recovery of PMV through critical habitat protection.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Continue current administrative closures limiting motorized recreation, including PMV critical habitat (existing and future designated).		X						
Prohibit motorized recreation within PMV critical habitat.			X		X			X
Open some areas of PMV critical habitat (existing and future designated) to motorized recreation and prohibit motorized recreation in other areas of critical habitat.	X	X				X	X	
Open some areas of critical habitat (existing and future designated) with some limited motorized recreation (seasonal closures, nighttime closures).				X				
Exclude PMV critical habitat from solar energy development.			X					X
Exclude PMV critical habitat from wind energy development.			X					X
Exclude PMV critical habitat from all other types of land use authorization.			X					X
Classify PMV critical habitat as an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Special Status Species (cont.)								
Peirson's Milk-vetch (cont.)								
Classify PMV critical habitat as an avoidance area for wind development.		X		X	X	X		
Classify PMV critical habitat as an avoidance area for all other types of land use authorization.		X		X	X	X		
Open PMV critical habitat to solar development.							X	
Open PMV critical habitat to wind development.							X	
Open PMV critical habitat to all other types of land use authorization.							X	
Visual Resources								
VRM Class I (by acreage)	n/a	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098
VRM Class II (by acreage)	n/a	104,739	173,794	104,739	104,739	104,739	16,031	104,739
VRM Class III (by acreage)	n/a	69,055	15,039	69,055	69,055	69,055	88,708	68,055
VRM Class IV (by acreage)	n/a	15,039	0	15,039	15,039	15,039	84,094	15,039
Total	*n/a*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*
Special Designations								
Lands Inventoried for Wilderness Characteristics								
WCU 1 would be managed under the recreation management zone for that alternative.	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
WCU 1 would be managed to protect wilderness characteristics present on the unit.			X					
WCU 1 would be recommended to be withdrawn from mineral entry and closed to mineral sale or leasing.			X					
WCU 1 would be recommended to be a right-of-way exclusion or avoidance area.			X					

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Special Designations (cont.)								
Lands Inventoried for Wilderness Characteristics (cont.)								
WCU 1 would be recommended to be closed or limited to OHV use.			X					
WCU 1 would be designated as VRM Class II.			X					
Wilderness								
Expand access by improving staging areas at wilderness access points.	X			X	X		X	X
Continue current level of access at wilderness access points.		X	X			X		
Provide new informational kiosks at wilderness access points.	X			X	X			X
Maintain current informational kiosks at wilderness access points.		X	X			X	X	
ACECs								
Reduce acreage of East Mesa ACEC in order to eliminate overlap with the ISD SRMA.			X	X	X	X	X	X
Exclude ACEC(s) from solar energy development.[1]			X					X
Exclude ACECs from wind energy development.			X					X
Classify ACECs as avoidance areas for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Classify ACECs as avoidance areas for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Open ACECs to solar energy development.							X	
Open ACECs to wind energy development.							X	

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Special Designations (cont.)								
ACECs (cont.)								
Classify ACECs as avoidance areas for all land use authorizations other than for solar and wind development.				X	X	X		
Existing and Proposed ACECs by Acreage								
Plank Road	416	416	416	416	416	416	416	416
East Mesa	6,454	6,454	5,802	5,802	5,802	5,802	5,802	5,802
North Algodones Dunes	25,756	25,756	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total acres for ACECs by alternative	*32,623*	*32,623*	*6,218*	*6,218*	*6,218*	*6,218*	*6,218*	*6,218*
Mineral Resources								
Locatable								
Propose withdrawal of the ACEC(s) and critical habitat from mineral entry.			X	X	X	X		
Maintain ACEC(s) as open to mineral entry under the Mining Law, subject to Section 7 and Section 106 consultations.	X	X					X	X
Propose withdrawal of ISD SRMA from mineral entry.			X					
Maintain the ISD SRMA, excluding the wilderness, as open to mineral entry under the Mining Law, subject to Section 7 and Section 106 consultations.	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Leaseable								
Classify the flat-tailed horned lizard management area as available for geothermal leasing, but with an NSO stipulation.								X

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Mineral Resources (cont.)								
Leaseable (cont.)								
Classify the one-mile planning zone (excluding flat-tailed horned lizard management area) as available for geothermal minerals leasing.								X
Open the entire Planning Area, with the exclusion of the wilderness, to geothermal minerals leasing, but with an NSO stipulation.				X				
Open the entire Planning Area, with the exclusion of the wilderness, to geothermal minerals leasing and surface occupancy.	X	X					X	
Allow geothermal mineral leasing on nominated lands under 43 CFR 3203.10.					X	X		
Prohibit geothermal minerals leasing within the entire Planning Area.			X					
Exclude donated lands from geothermal minerals leasing.								X
Exclude ISD SRMA from geothermal minerals leasing.								X
Prohibit surface occupancy within critical habitat, ACEC(s), other special area designations, and camping and staging areas.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Prohibit surface occupancy within the ISD SRMA.			X					
Salable								
Prohibit mineral sales or free use permits within the ISD SRMA.			X					X

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Mineral Resources (cont.)								
Lands Available for Geothermal Leasing by Acreage								
Available	188,832	188,832	0	0	11,939	11,939	188,832	35,115
Not Available	0	0	188,832	0	176,894	176,894	0	139,691
Available, but with an NSO stipulation	0	0	0	188,832	0	0	0	14,025
Wilderness (not available; closed by Congress*)	n/a	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098
Total	*188,832*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*
Recreation								
Allow camping and OHV recreation within some of the microphyll woodlands south of SR-78 and north of I-8.	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Allow camping 300 feet along edge of Ted Kipf Road.	X	X						
Allow camping 300 feet from centerline of Ted Kipf Road.			X	X	X	X	X	X
Prohibit camping within the microphyll woodlands south of Wash 33 and north of Wash 70. OHV recreation would continue to be allowed in this area.								X
RMZs by Acreage								
Open RMZ			74,676	105,843	103,839	108,914	125,710	127,416
Resource Protection RMZ			61,680	29,122	32,516	27,441	10,645	9,046
Limited RMZ			52,477	53,868	52,477	52,477	52,477	52,370
North Algodones Dunes Wilderness RMZ			26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098
Total			*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*
Transportation and Public Access								
OHV Management Designations by Acreage								
Open	120,393	87,713	74,676	105,843	103,839	108,914	125,710	127,416
Closed	26,098	75,322	87,778	55,220	58,614	53,539	36,743	35,144
Limited	68,440	51,896	52,477	53,868	52,477	52,477	52,477	52,370
Total Acres	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*	*214,930*

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Lands and Realty								
Lands Available for Solar Energy Development by Acreage								
Available	188,832	188,832	47,131	39,694	39,694	39,694	188,832	35,115
Avoidance	0	0	0	144,290	144,290	144,290	0	0
Excluded	0	0	141,702	4,847	4,847	4,847	0	153,717
Total	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*
Lands Available for Wind Energy Development by Acreage								
Available	188,832	188,832	47,131	39,694	39,694	39,694	188,832	35,115
Avoidance	0	0	0	144,290	144,290	144,290	0	0
Excluded	0	0	141,702	4,847	4,847	4,847	0	153,717
Total	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*	*188,832*
Land Use Authorizations								
Allow apiary permits on a case-by-case basis within strategically located sites to limit interaction with the public.	X			X	X	X	X	X
Prohibit apiary permits in the Planning Area.		X	X					
The wilderness is withdrawn from all forms of land entry.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ACEC(s) would be exclusion areas for solar energy development.[2]			X					X
ACECs would be exclusion areas for wind energy development.			X					X
ACECs would be avoidance areas for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
ACECs would be avoidance areas for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
ACECs would be available for solar energy development.							X	
ACECs would be available for wind energy development.							X	

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Lands and Realty (cont.)								
Land Use Authorizations (cont.)								
ACECs would be avoidance areas for all land use authorizations other than for solar and wind development.				X	X	X		
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be an exclusion area for solar energy development.			X					X
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					X
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be avoidance area for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be available for solar energy development.							X	
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be available for wind energy development.							X	
PMV critical habitat would be an exclusion area solar energy development.			X					X
PMV critical habitat would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					X
PMV critical habitat would be an exclusion area for all other types of land use authorization.			X					X
PMV critical habitat would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
PMV critical habitat would be an avoidance area for wind development.		X		X	X	X		
PMV critical habitat would be an avoidance area for all other types of land use authorization.		X		X	X	X		

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Lands and Realty (cont.)								
Land Use Authorizations (cont.)								
PMV critical habitat would be available area for solar development.							X	
PMV critical habitat would be available area for wind development.							X	
PMV critical habitat would be available for all other types of land use authorization.							X	
MUC I (intensive) lands would be an exclusion area for solar energy development.			X					
MUC I (intensive) lands would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					
MUC I (intensive) lands would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
MUC I (intensive) lands would be an avoidance area for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
MUC L (limited) lands would be an exclusion area for solar energy development.			X					
MUC L (limited) lands would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					
MUC L (limited) lands would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
MUC L (limited) lands would be an avoidance area for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Donated lands would be an exclusion area for solar energy development.			X					X
Donated lands would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					X
Donated lands would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND ALLOCATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Lands and Realty (cont.)								
Land Use Authorizations (cont.)								
Donated lands would be an avoidance area for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Donated lands would be available for solar energy development.							X	
Donated lands would be available for wind energy development.							X	
Entire Planning Area would be available for solar energy development (with exception of wilderness)	X	X					X	
Entire Planning Area would be available for wind energy development (with exception of wilderness)	X	X					X	
Withdrawals by Acreage								
Existing withdrawal—North Algodones Dunes Wilderness	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098
Public Health and Safety								
Maintain area adjacent to the U.S.–Mexico border as open to public use and continue voluntary compliance through public education and cooperation with USBP to enhance public safety.	X	X					X	X
Prohibit public use of the area within 100 feet of the U.S.–Mexico border.			X					
Prohibit public use of the Roosevelt Reservation area (60 feet) adjacent to the U.S.–Mexico border.				X	X	X		

2.3.1.1 Goals and Objectives

Four MUCs are used in the CDCA Plan. Each describes a different type and level or degree of use which is permitted within that geographic area. The description of each MUC is listed below:

- Class C (Controlled Use): These lands are to be preserved in a natural state, and access generally is limited to non-motorized, non-mechanized means (e.g., by foot or horseback).

- Class L (Limited Use): These lands are managed to protect sensitive, natural, scenic, ecological, and cultural resource values. They provide for generally lower intensity and carefully controlled multiple uses that do not significantly diminish resource values.

- Class M (Moderate Use): These lands are managed in a controlled balance between higher intensity use and protection. A wide variety of uses, such as mining, livestock grazing, recreation, and energy and utility development are allowed. Any damage caused by permitted uses must be mitigated.

- Class I (Intensive Use): These lands are managed for concentrated use to meet human needs. Reasonable protection is provided for sensitive natural values, and mitigation of impacts and rehabilitation of impacted areas will occur when possible.

The types and intensity of recreational uses allowed by MUCs are shown in Table 2-2 below.

Additionally, MUC Class L allows for the removal of vegetation by permit only; allows power plants if they are environmentally acceptable; allows for removal of sand and gravel after the appropriate level of environmental analysis; and mandates an EIS for plans of operation involving locatable minerals.

TABLE 2-2
TYPES AND INTENSITY OF RECREATIONAL USES ALLOWED BY MULTIPLE-USE CLASSES

	Multiple Use Class – C Controlled Use (Wilderness Management)	Multiple Use Class – L Limited Use	Multiple Use Class – M Moderate Use	Multiple Use Class – I Intensive Use
Types and Intensities of Recreational Use	This class is suitable for non-mechanical types of recreational experience that generally involve low to very low user densities. Recreational opportunities provided include, but are not limited to, the following characteristic activities: • backpacking • primitive, unimproved site camping • hiking • horseback riding • rockhounding • nature study and observation • photography and painting • rockclimbing • spelunking • hunting	This class is suitable for recreation that generally involves low to moderate user densities. Recreation opportunities include those permitted in Class C and the following activities: • land-sailing on dry lakes • non-competitive vehicle touring and events only on approved routes of travel All organized vehicle events, competitive or not, require a permit specifying the conditions of use. These conditions include, but are not limited to: • approved routes • no pitting, start, finish or spectator areas	This class is suitable for a wide range of recreation activities that may involve moderate to high user densities. Recreational opportunities include those permitted in Class L. Competitive motorized vehicle events are limited to existing routes of travel and must be approved by the authorized officer. Pit, start, and finish areas must be designated by the authorized officer. All competitive events and organized events having 50 or more vehicles require permits.	This class is suitable for recreation activities that generally involve high user densities. A wide array of recreational opportunities will be found in this class. Off-road vehicle play will be allowed where approved in open areas. Uses permitted are the same as Class M; in addition, motorized-vehicle plat is allowed in areas designated open. All aspects of competitive events will be permitted except where specific mitigations are stipulated by the authorized officer.
Recreational Facilities	Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health and safety may be allowed at the discretion of authorized officer or in accordance with approved Wilderness Plans.	Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health and safety may be allowed at the discretion of authorized officer or in accordance with approved Wilderness Plans.	Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health and safety are allowed.	Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health and safety are allowed.

TABLE 2-2
TYPES AND INTENSITY OF RECREATIONAL USES ALLOWED BY MULTIPLE-USE CLASSES

	Multiple Use Class – C Controlled Use (Wilderness Management)	Multiple Use Class – L Limited Use	Multiple Use Class – M Moderate Use	Multiple Use Class – I Intensive Use
Recreational Trails	Trails are open for non-vehicle use and new trails for non-motorized access may be allowed.	Trails are open for non-vehicle use and new trails for non-motorized access may be allowed.	Trails are open for non-vehicle use and new trails for non-motorized access may be allowed.	Trails are open for non-vehicle use and new trails for non-motorized access may be allowed.

Source: BLM 1999.

2.3.1.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

The Planning Area, as currently managed, contains all four MUCs as designated in the CDCA Plan. The existing MUCs would be carried forward under Alternatives 1 and 2; MUCs would be amended under Alternatives 3 through 8 in the Proposed RAMP. The general areas covered by the MUCs, and their acres, are listed in Table 2-3 below. The MUCs are also depicted in Map 2-1.

TABLE 2-3
MUCs[1] WITHIN THE ISD

MUC C	MUC L	MUC M	MUC I
North Algodones Dunes Wilderness	Large Central Portion of the ISD	Area between Old Coachella Canal and New Coachella Canal	Mammoth Wash Area
	Ogilby Area		Dunebuggy Flats Area
			Glamis Area
			Buttercup Area
			Gecko Area

[1]CDCA listings

2.3.2 Land Health Standards Management

The BLM actively manages BLM-administered lands under the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (Rangeland Standards and Guidelines) through authorized uses. Although developed for grazing and rangeland management, it is BLM policy to develop Land Health Standards for all ecosystems through the land use planning process (BLM Handbook H-4180-1, Rangeland Health Standards, II-1). The Secretary of the Interior's Healthy Lands Initiative, which began in 2007, is intended to accelerate land restoration, increase productivity, and improve the health of public lands in the western United States. The goal of the Initiative is to preserve the diversity and productivity of public and private lands across the landscape. Land Health Standards for livestock grazing in the California Desert District have not been approved by the Secretary of the Interior. Until approved by the Secretary, the National Fallback Rangeland Standards and Guidelines for grazing allotments will apply to the Planning Area under the No Action Alternative. This RAMP includes proposed land health standards for Alternatives 2 through 8. If any action alternative is selected, the BLM will submit the proposed land health standards to the Secretary of the Interior for approval. The fallback standards will remain in effect until the proposed standards are approved. Standards are defined as an expression of the level of physical and biological condition or degree of function required for healthy, sustainable public lands. While these standards apply to all public lands managed by the BLM, some resources or conditions may not be present on all public lands. The standards are presented here in full, regardless of resources present (such as riparian areas).

BLM grazing regulations in Part 43 CFR subpart 4180 also require guidelines for grazing management. Guidelines are developed for grazing management and are the types of grazing management activities and practices determined to be appropriate to ensure that the standards can be met or significant progress can be made toward meeting them. Because there are no grazing allotments in the Planning Area, guidelines for grazing management are outside the scope of this plan amendment and therefore are not considered.

Throughout Chapter 2, standards for individual resources are incorporated into each resource's goals and objectives. In Chapter 4, impacts of the standards are discussed with the impacts of all goals and objectives for the applicable resource.

2.3.2.1 Goals and Objectives

- Meet or exceed the national policy for watersheds, ecological processes, water quality, and habitats.

- Implement Rangeland Standards and Guidelines as directed by national policy when approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

2.3.2.2 Management Actions by Alternative

2.3.2.2.1 Alternative 1

Under Alternative 1, BLM would continue to use existing National Fallback Rangeland Standards and Guidelines for rangeland health. Fallback Standards and Guidelines were developed to implement 43 CFR 4180 grazing regulations. BLM's policy is to apply these Rangeland Standards to public lands outside grazing allotments. The National Fallback Rangeland Standards and Guidelines (43 CFR 4180.2[f][1])are:

1. Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and landform.

2. Riparian–wetland areas are in proper functioning condition.

3. Stream–channel morphology (including but not limited to gradient, width/depth ratio, channel roughness, and sinuosity) and functions are appropriate for the climate and landform.

4. Healthy, productive, and diverse populations of native species exist and are maintained.

2.3.2.2.2 Alternatives 2 through 8

Propose for adoption by the Secretary of the Interior the following regional standards for land health. The proposed standards of land health are:

Standard #1—Soils: Soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, geology, landform, and past uses. Adequate infiltration and permeability of soils allow accumulation of soil moisture necessary for optimal plant growth and vigor, and provide a stable watershed. Criteria for this standard are as follows:

- Canopy and ground cover are appropriate for the site.
- There is diversity of plant species with a variety of root depths.
- Litter and soil organic matter are present at suitable sites.
- Microbiotic soil crusts are maintained and in place.
- Evidence of wind or water erosion does not exceed natural rates for the site.
- Soil permeability, nutrient cycling, and water infiltration are appropriate for the soil type.

Standard #2—Riparian–Wetland and Stream Function: Wetland systems associated with subsurface, running, and standing water function properly and have the ability to recover from major disturbances. Hydrologic conditions are maintained. Criteria for this standard are as follows:

- Vegetative cover adequately protects banks and dissipates energy during peak water flows.
- Dominant vegetation is an appropriate mixture of vigorous riparian species.
- Recruitment of preferred species is adequate to sustain the plant community.
- Stable soils store and release water slowly.
- Plant species present indicate that soil moisture characteristics are being maintained.
- There is minimal cover of shallow-rooted invader species and they are not displacing deep-rooted native species.
- Shading of stream courses and water sources is sufficient to support riparian vertebrates and invertebrates.

- Stream is in balance with water and sediment is being supplied by the watershed where appropriate.
- Stream channel size and meander is appropriate for soils, geology, and landscape.
- Adequate organic matter (litter and standing dead plant material) is present to protect the site and to replenish soil nutrients through decomposition.

Standard #3—Native Species: Healthy, productive, and diverse habitats for native species, including special status species, are maintained in places of natural occurrences. Criteria for this standard are as follows:

- Photosynthetic and ecological processes continue at levels suitable for the site, season, and precipitation regimes.
- Plant vigor nutrient cycles and energy flows are maintaining desirable plants and ensuring reproduction and recruitment.
- Plant communities are producing litter within acceptable limits.
- Age class distributions of plants and animals are sufficient to overcome mortality fluctuations.
- Distribution and cover of plant species and their habitats allow for reproduction and recovery from localized catastrophic events.
- Alien and noxious plants and wildlife do not exceed acceptable levels or require action to prevent the spread and introduction of noxious/invasive weeds.
- Appropriate natural disturbances are evident.
- Populations and their habitats are sufficiently distributed to prevent the need for new listings of special status species.

Standard #4—Water Quality: Water quality would meet state and federal standards, including exemptions allowable by law. Criteria for this standard are as follows:

- Dissolved oxygen levels, aquatic organisms, and aquatic plants (e.g., macroinvertebrates, fish, and algae) indicate support of beneficial uses.
- Chemical constituents, water temperatures, nutrient loads, fecal coliform, and turbidity are appropriate for the site or source.
- Best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented (BMPs have been included in Appendix C of this document).

2.3.3 Air Resources Management

The FLPMA and the Clean Air Act (CAA) of 1970 and Amendments of 1977 and 1990 (42 USC 7401 et seq.) prohibit BLM or any federal land management agency from conducting, supporting, approving, licensing, or permitting any activity on federal land that does not comply with all applicable local, state, and federal air quality laws, statutes, regulations, and implementation plans. In support of these regulations, the El Centro Field Office has developed a Draft Dust Control Plan, currently under review by the Imperial County Air Pollution Control Board, which provides benefits to air quality and other resources by decreasing air pollutant concentrations, increasing visibility, and decreasing atmospheric deposition (Appendix D). Adherence to air quality regulatory programs through coordination with other federal and state agencies is a key to air quality management success.

Other applicable sections of the CAA include:

- Applicable National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS; Section 109)
- State Implementation Plans (SIPs; Section 110)
- Control of Pollution from Federal Facilities (Section 118)
- Prevention of Significant Deterioration, including visibility impacts to mandatory Federal Class I Areas (Section 160 et seq.)
- Conformity Analyses and Determinations (Section 176(c))

The CDCA Plan, as part of the MUC Guidelines, provides management direction for air quality protection in the region. Under this plan, areas will be managed to protect their air quality and visibility in accordance with Class II objectives of Part C of the CAA Amendments, unless otherwise designated another class by the State of California as a result of recommendations developed by any BLM air quality management plan.

2.3.3.1 Goals and Objectives

- Maintain or improve air quality as established by the NAAQS and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) through cooperative management of emissions with industry, the State of California, and federal agencies.
- The BLM would strive to minimize, within the scope of its authority, any emissions that may cause violations of air quality standards, add to acid rain, or degrade visibility.

2.3.3.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Comply with the applicable State of California air quality standards for all proposed actions that would contribute to particulate matter emissions in the air as a result of actions taken.

- As needed, based on the BLM Dust Control Plan, treat the entry road to Dunebuggy Flats Campground for dust control to reduce the impact of OHV activities on air quality, as personnel and funding levels allow.

- Install air meters (numbers and locations to be determined) for ozone and particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}) in the Planning Area, if requested by Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Implement actions to mitigate for contributions to the non-attainment due to activities in the Planning Area, as requested by ICAPCD, and as personnel and funding levels allow.

- Evaluate impacts of activities within the Planning Area to air quality non-attainment. Implement BLM dust control plan to reduce the effects to air quality as required by the ICAPCD.

The best available control measures would be used for all alternatives. These measures may include hardening of applicable roadways, watering or applying dust suppressants to roadways, limiting vehicle speeds, or restricting vehicular access. BLM maintains a Dust Control Plan with the ICAPCD and would use this plan to determine what best available control measures to use.

2.3.4 Soil Resource Management

The ISD comprises a variety of dune types (e.g., draas, linear, parabolic, barchan, zibars). These dunes are separated occasionally by inter-dune areas, where relatively little sand accumulates into dune formations. The dune system lies on alluvial fan material emanating from the Cargo Muchacho and Chocolate mountains. Some dunes reach 300 feet in height.

The Planning Area contains a wide variety of soil types, as might be expected in a zone which spans the transition from low desert to rocky desert mountains. This variety of soil types is the result of diversity in parent material, relief, climate, living organisms, and age of the soils.

The CDCA Plan did not establish any goals for soil resources.

2.3.4.1 Goals and Objectives

- Manage soils to maintain productivity and to minimize erosion.
- Preserve natural process of dune movement and formation.
- Meet proposed Rangeland Health Standard #1, as related to soils per the regional standards of rangeland health (see Section 2.3.2.2).

2.3.4.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Minimize surface disturbance from authorized activities. Post-activity disturbed surfaces would be restored to a pre-disturbance or natural condition as applicable.
- Incorporate erosion control measures into projects on a case-by-case basis.

2.3.5 Water Resources Management

The objective of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act [CWA] PL 92-500, as amended; 33 USC §§ 1251 et seq.) is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters (Section 101a). Under Sections 401 and 404, the CWA regulates point and non-point-source pollution. Other applicable regulations include the California Water Code.

Surface waters in the Planning Area can be divided into watersheds, portions of the landscape that collect runoff from the surface, concentrate it into channels, and conduct the resulting flow to a definable outlet. The Planning Area is traversed by the All-American and the Coachella canals, which carry water from the Colorado River to the Imperial and Coachella valleys. The Planning Area is within the Colorado River watershed basin (Watershed Region 7).

The Planning Area occurs within the Amos–Ogilby–East Mesa groundwater basin. The groundwater resources within BLM-managed lands are managed by the BLM. This is without regard to Federally Reserved Water Rights, which apply to all water needs related to the reservation of federal lands. Local jurisdictions may exert authority over some aspects of the production of groundwater, such as drilling. BLM works in cooperation with the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and California Department of Water Resources (DWR) regarding management of the groundwater resource.

The CDCA Plan, as part of the MUC Guidelines, provides management direction for water quality protection in the region. Under this plan:

- Class C areas will be managed to maintain and enhance both surface and groundwater resources.

- Class L areas will be managed to provide for the protection and enhancement of surface and groundwater resources, except for instances of short-term degradation caused by water development projects. BMPs, developed by the BLM during the planning process outlined in the Clean Water Act Section 208, will be used to avoid degradation and to comply with EO 12088.

- Class M and I areas will be managed to minimize degradation of water resources. BMPs, developed by the BLM during the planning process outlined in the Clean Water Act Section 208, will be used to avoid degradation and to comply with EO 12088.

2.3.5.1 Goals and Objectives

2.3.5.1.1 General

- Promote BLM activities or authorized activities that do not degrade surface or groundwater in the Planning Area.

- Promote water quality to achieve or make significant progress toward achieving established BLM management objectives such as meeting wildlife needs.

- Meet proposed Rangeland Health Standard #4, as related to water quality per the regional standards of rangeland health (see Section 2.3.2.2).

2.3.5.1.2 Surface Water

- Identify and protect surface waters where possible.

- Preserve and enhance the natural condition and hydrology of washes.

- Identify area-wide use restrictions or other protective measures to meet federal, state, and local water quality requirements.

2.3.5.1.3 Groundwater

- Make groundwater, where present, available for beneficial use on public lands in coordination with the State of California and Imperial County.

2.3.5.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Prevent or reduce water quality degradation through implementation of applicable BMPs or other specific mitigation measures, when applicable (BMPs have been included in Appendix C of this document).

- Continue to maintain or improve water quality in accordance with state and federal standards. Consult with the appropriate state agencies on proposed projects that may significantly affect water quality.

- Maintain authorized vehicle routes in a manner that will promote natural hydrology and protect water quality through application of BMPs (BMPs have been included in Appendix C of this document).

2.3.6 Vegetative Resource Management

The primary vegetation communities within the Planning area are: creosote bush scrub, microphyll woodlands, psammophytic scrub, and canal-influenced vegetation (Westec 1977; BLM 1987).

The basis for managing vegetation and invasive or noxious weeds for BLM lands can be found in the following federal laws, regulations, and policies:

- Taylor Grazing Act of 1934

- Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978

- CWA of 1977

- Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974

- EO 13112—*Invasive Species Control*

- BLM Manual Section 1740—*Renewable Resource Improvements and Treatments*

- BLM Manual 9011—*Chemical Pest Control*

- *Vegetation Treatment Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in* 17 *Western States Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement* and ROD of November 2007

- Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended

- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Ecological Site Guides

- California State Director and Pacific Southwest Regional Forester Traditional Gathering Policy (Appendix E)

In addition, the following non-federal agreements and laws apply to the Planning Area:

- California Native Plant Protection Act of 1977
- California Endangered Species Act
- 1988 Food and Agricultural Code of California (Division 23, California Desert Native Plants Acts)

The BLM management goals for vegetation from the CDCA Plan's Vegetation Element are outlined below:

- Maintain the productivity of the vegetative resource while meeting the consumptive needs of wildlife, livestock, wild horses and burros, and humans. Provide for such uses under principles of sustained yield.
- Manage plant species on the federal and state lists of threatened and endangered species and their habitats, so that the continued existence of each will not be jeopardized. Stabilize and, where possible, improve populations through management and recovery plans developed and implemented cooperatively with the USFWS and the CDFG.
- Manage plant species that BLM has officially designated as sensitive for California and their habitats, so that the potential for federal or state listing is minimized. Include consideration of sensitive species habitats in all decisions, so that impacts are avoided, mitigated, or compensated.
- Manage unusual plant assemblages, so that their continued existence is maintained. In all actions, include consideration of unusual plant assemblages, so that impacts are avoided, mitigated, or compensated.
- Manage wetland and riparian areas in the CDCA with the following specific objectives: a) avoid the long-term and short-term impacts associated with the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetland and riparian areas; b) preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetland and riparian areas, which may include constraining or excluding those uses that would cause significant long-term ecological damage; c) include practical measures to minimize harm in all actions causing adverse impacts on wetlands and riparian areas; and d) retain all wetlands and riparian habitats presently under BLM administration wherever high resource values exist and adverse impacts cannot be mitigated.
- Accomplish the objectives of other resources by altering plant composition, density, and/or cover. Objectives include eliminating harmful or noxious plants, increasing livestock or wildlife forage production, and improving wildlife habitat characteristics.

Diversified native plant communities are favored over monocultures or communities based on non-native species.

2.3.6.1 Plant Communities

2.3.6.1.1 Goals and Objectives

Planning Area-wide

- Maintain viable populations of all native species throughout the Planning Area.
- Maintain habitat connectivity throughout the Planning Area to limit habitat fragmentation and maintain transfer of genetic material from all sub-populations.
- Protect biological diversity through conservation of native plant communities and special status species with consideration for multiple uses of the land and sustained ecological function.
- Maintain and enhance a mosaic of native plant communities.
- Promote wildlife forage and habitat values, and maintain and/or restore intrinsic biological integrity and value of all native plant communities.
- Protect or restore native species through an integrated weed management approach emphasizing prevention, early detection, and eradication of invasive non-native plants.
- Promote plant communities that continue to support wildlife in a manner consistent with other resource management practices or uses.
- Promote natural processes that secure soil resources and protect against erosion and air quality degradation.
- Meet proposed Rangeland Health Standards #3 and #4, as related to vegetative resources per the regional standards of rangeland health (see Section 2.3.2.2).

Desired Plant Communities

Creosote Bush Scrub

- Promote multi-layered desert communities that are dominated by perennial vegetation, which provide for watershed connectivity, sediment capture and storage, energy dissipation, and bank stability.
- Promote diverse vegetative composition and structure that include such species as creosote (*Larrea tridentata*), desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis* spp. *arcuata*), Mormon

tea (*Ephedra trifurca*), burro bush (*Ambrosia dumosa*) and giant Spanish needle (*Palafoxia arida* var. *gigantea*).

- Promote sufficient vegetation that provides landscape habitat connectivity and physical stability, which in turn support ground-dwelling species.

Microphyll Woodlands

- Promote multi-layered desert communities that are dominated by perennial vegetation, which provide for watershed connectivity, sediment capture and storage, energy dissipation, and bank stability.

- Promote diverse vegetative composition and structure that include such species as blue palo verde (*Cercidium floridum* spp. *floridum)*, desert willow, ironwood (*Olneya tesota*), mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa* var. *torreyana)*, smoke tree (*Psorothamnus spinosus)*, and catclaw acacia (*Acacia greggii*). Size and growth form, such as overhanging branches and mid- and under-story vegetation, are represented by naturally occurring species of moderate density.

- Promote sufficient vegetation that provides landscape habitat connectivity and physical stability, which in turn support ground-dwelling species.

Psammophytic Scrub

- Promote diverse vegetative composition and structure that include such species as Colorado desert buckwheat (*Eriogonum deserticola*), Mormon tea, fan-leaf crinkle-mat (*Tequilia plicata*), and Wiggin's croton (*Croton wigginsii*).

- Promote sufficient vegetation to provide landscape habitat connectivity and physical stability, which in turn supports ground-dwelling species.

2.3.6.1.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Implement a monitoring plan for the microphyll woodland community. Analyze the monitoring data to compare the trend in vegetation cover due to the different types of impacts in each area.

- Implement a thorough monitoring program to track recreation use and the condition of special status species (Appendix F).

- Avoid adverse impacts to special status species, priority species, plants protected by the California Native Plant Protection Act, and their associated habitats by developing, modifying, redesigning, mitigating, or abandoning specific projects.

- Restore degraded native plant communities through restoration activities that could include but are not limited to exclusion of disturbance activity, invasive plant removal, site preparation, and revegetation.

- Restore surface disturbance from discretionary activities (e.g., ROW construction) with rehabilitation measures including imprinting, contouring, debris and brush replacement, native plant seeding (where appropriate), and invasive plant treatment.

- Restore surface disturbance from illegal trespass activities (not including closure violations) with rehabilitation measures including imprinting, contouring, debris and brush replacement, native planting or seeding (where appropriate), and invasive plant treatment.

- Require minimum impact approaches such as trimming trees instead of removal, using existing routes and ROWs instead of creating new ones, and using previously disturbed sites and crushed vegetation instead of blading new routes, where appropriate.

- Encourage transplanting of plant species directly on-site or onto neighboring public lands where feasible, using approved protocol for surface-disturbing activities where avoidance is not possible.

- Design surface-disturbing activities to avoid impacts to desired plant communities to the greatest extent possible. Where avoidance is not possible, these areas would be restored to their previously undisturbed or native condition. Restoration would follow approved protocol and include watering and maintenance until establishment.

- Remove tamarisk (*Tamarix* spp.) and other non-native invasive plant species using mechanical and herbicide applications in accordance with BLM policy on minimum tools in wilderness and the Vegetation Treatment Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in 17 Western States FPEIS (BLM 2007a) and ROD of November 2007.

- Salvage useable native plants and parts of plants where plants would normally be lost due to development, disposal, or disturbance on public lands when practicable. Plants and parts of plants may be replanted on public lands or salvaged for public purposes. Plants and parts of plants would only be removed from public lands pursuant to applicable federal and state laws and regulations governing the sale, disposal, and transportation of plants.

- Use native plant materials for landscaping at developed facilities within public lands.

- Treat non-native invasive species, where appropriate, to meet management objectives.

- Limit the introduction of non-native plants through an education program partnered with recreational users, OHV users, and other recreational users.

- Develop partnerships with adjacent landowners, local agencies, state agencies, and federal agencies to manage habitat, conduct restoration activities, develop educational material, and provide interpretation of vegetation.

- Give rehabilitation priority to habitat that supports special status species and ACECs.

2.3.6.1.3 Management Actions by Alternative

Table 2-4 presents the management actions that vary by alternative.

TABLE 2-4
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR VEGETATION RESOURCES BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Prohibit removal of native standing trees, alive or dead, with the exception of fire management, public health and safety, or disease control.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Classify microphyll woodlands as avoidance areas[1] for all commercial and non-commercial surface-disturbing activities.				X	X	X		X
Classify microphyll woodlands as exclusion areas[1] for all commercial and non-commercial surface-disturbing activities.			X					
Exclude microphyll woodlands south of Wash 20 from OHV recreation.			X	X	X			
Allow OHV recreation and camping in the portion of the microphyll woodlands south of Wash 33 and north of Wash 70.	X	X				X	X	
Allow OHV recreation and prohibit camping in microphyll woodlands south of Wash 33 and north of Wash 70 (see also Section 2.3.16, Transportation and Public Access, in this chapter).								X

[1] Avoidance areas are defined in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook as areas to be avoided but which may be available for location rights-of-way with special stipulations. Exclusion areas are defined as areas which are not available for location of rights-of-way under any conditions.

2.3.6.2 Priority Plant Species

Priority plant species are rare, unusual, or key species that are not listed as BLM sensitive or listed as threatened and endangered species. Priority plant species are known to occur on or near the BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area (see list in Chapter 3, Section 3.5). The priority plant species list would be updated on a regular basis to reflect new information and survey data. These species have ecological importance, rarity, and human interest. Identification of priority plant species would help prevent the avoidable loss of these plants due to development and implementation of other multiple-use objectives.

2.3.6.2.1 Goals and Objectives

- Ensure that plant species populations are stable or increasing, with adequate recruitment given the ecological conditions and dynamics associated with the Planning Area.

- Promote landscape-scale conservation of the priority plant species to protect or restore botanical resources of concern and to ensure consistent management across jurisdictional boundaries.

2.3.6.2.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Minimize or mitigate loss of habitat or fragmentation of priority plant species populations.

- Avoid priority plant species where possible to mitigate for surface-disturbing activities. Where avoidance is not possible, these populations would be restored as appropriate to their previously undisturbed or native condition after completion of the activity. Restoration of priority plant species and habitat would follow approved protocol and include watering and maintenance until establishment.

- Implement protection and restoration measures such as signage, invasive weeds treatment, and native plants seed collection for the priority plant species.

- Treat non-native invasive species where appropriate to protect priority plant species.

2.3.6.3 Invasive Non-native Plants

Non-native, invasive, and state- and federally listed noxious weed species collectively constitute one of the gravest threats to the biodiversity of BLM lands. Two critical components of managing these species are (1) identifying those species that threaten biodiversity and other ecological functions and values and (2) prioritizing species for management efforts, which must be based, at least in part, on the ecological impacts imparted by these invaders.

Non-native invasive species degrade aesthetic vegetation values, tourism opportunities, and recreational value of public lands. Native species in upland and riparian ecosystems are competitively reduced, and the ecological process altered when non-native plants (both noxious and invasive weeds) become established and flourish.

2.3.6.3.1 Goals and Objectives

- Prevent the introduction or spread of non-native invasive and state- and federally listed noxious weed species and promote the reduction of existing invasive species populations.

2.3.6.3.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Use an integrated pest management (IPM) approach to ensure that the best methods available are implemented to prevent the introduction of and to control the spread of non-native plants, invasive plants, and noxious weeds (U.S. DOI 2007).
- Treat non-native invasive species that constitute significant fuel load and fire threat directly by using IPM or management through fire breaks and other tactics.
- Treat tamarisk and other invasive, non-native species in the Planning Area.

2.3.6.4 Vegetative Use Authorization

The BLM manages vegetation for habitat, multiple use, and sustained yield. This section describes what authorizations are needed to collect plant material from public land and what activities do not require written authorization.

2.3.6.4.1 Goals and Objectives

- Ensure presence of dead and downed wood on the ground to provide wildlife habitat and reduce soil erosion.
- Allow for the collection of plant material consistent with the maintenance of natural ecosystem processes.

2.3.6.4.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Prohibit wood cutting for commercial purposes in the Planning Area.
- Prohibit dead and downed wood collection within ACECs.
- Prohibit commercial wood collection within the microphyll woodlands or ACECs.
- Grant free use, without permit, of culturally important plants for traditional cultural gathering of vegetation by Native Americans in accordance with Interagency Traditional Gathering Policy (see Appendix E). No commercial vegetation collection would be permitted. All other collection would only be allowed for educational, research, or environmental restoration purposes.

Allowable Uses Requiring Permits

To manage vegetation resources, the BLM would administer a permit program for specific commercial and non-commercial uses. Vegetative use authorization would be considered for educational, research, or environmental restoration purposes, and permits would include standard guidelines and stipulations for collection. Permits could

also include stipulation developed during a site-specific NEPA analysis. Priority plant species would be protected and collections would be permitted on a case-by-case basis.

- **Plant and Seed Collection.** Scientific collection of vegetative materials, including seeds, would require a free-use permit (Form 5510). Commercial seed collection would require a permit on BLM lands and would follow approved protocol. Seed collection for BLM administrative use would follow approved protocol.

- **Salvage Plant Collection.** Plant salvage would be allowed within the Planning Area for educational, research, or environmental restoration purposes. Plant salvage would require prior written authorization from BLM as well as a permit from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as required by the California Native Plant Protection Act.

Allowable Uses Not Requiring Permits

The public does not need a written authorization or permit for the following uses:

- Per 43 CFR 8365.1-5(b), "Except on developed recreation sites and areas, or where otherwise prohibited and posted, it is permissible to collect from the public lands reasonable amounts of the following for noncommercial purposes":

    1. Small quantities (no more than 20 percent of available resource from any individual plant and from total collecting area) of flowers for personal use

    2. Small quantities (no more than 20 percent of available resource from any individual plant and from total collecting area) of dry vegetation, nuts, or berries

    3. Five or fewer pieces (i.e., cuttings) of a live native plant (California Native Plant Protection Act)—no whole plants may be collected

    4. Tamarisk in any quantities

- Free use, without permit, of culturally important plants is granted for traditional cultural gathering of vegetation by Native Americans, in accordance with the California State Director and Pacific Southwest Regional Forester Traditional Gathering Policy (see Appendix E).

- Collection of dead and downed wood from microphyll woodlands or ACECs for use in campfires on public lands (43 CFR 8365.1-5[b]).

Prohibited Uses (Collection Not Allowed)

The public is prohibited from collecting:

- Live cacti of any kind

- Whole, live native plants
- Fuel wood for home heating purposes
- All species in the family Fouquieriaceae (e.g., ocotillo, candlewood); the genus *Prosopis* (mesquites); the genus *Cercidium* (palo verde); *Acacia greggii* (catclaw acacia); *Dalea spinosa* (smoketree); and *Olneya testota* (ironwood), including both dead and live specimens
- Any species listed as a special status species in Chapter 3.0, Section 3.7
- The collection and possession of ironwood at any time would be prohibited.

California Department of Fish and Game Code 1925-26 gives the Department authority to enforce the provisions of the California Desert Native Plants Act. Supplementary rules will be published through the Federal Register after the publication of the ROD. The BLM will comply with 43 CFR 8365.1-6.

2.3.6.4.3 Management Actions by Alternative

The following management actions for vegetative use authorizations presented in Table 2-5 vary by alternative.

TABLE 2-5
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR VEGETATIVE USE AUTHORIZATION BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Prohibit removal of native standing trees alive or dead with the exception of fire management, public health and safety, or disease control.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Allow collection of dead and downed wood in the microphyll woodlands.		X		X	X	X	X	
Prohibit collection of dead and downed wood within the ISD SRMA.			X					X

2.3.7 Wildlife Resource Management

The following laws, regulations, and policies direct the management of fish and wildlife on BLM-administered public lands:

- Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918
- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as amended 1962

- EO 13112—*Invasive Species*
- EO 13186—*Conservation of Migratory Birds*
- EO 13443—*Enhancement of Hunting Opportunities*
- BLM Manual 6840—*Special Status Species Management*
- BLM Manual 6500—*Wildlife, Fish, and Plant Resources*
- BLM Manual 6740—*Wetland–Riparian Area Protection and Management*

BLM ensures that the public lands are managed in accordance with FLPMA (43 USC 1701 et seq.) and other applicable laws and regulations under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. BLM El Centro manages the ISD SRMA to both preserve and protect certain designated areas in their natural condition to provide shelter, food, and habitat for fish and wildlife, and other areas to provide for outdoor recreational uses. The BLM implements goals and management tools in accordance with the CDCA Plan to develop management strategies or plans for wildlife and desert habitats to achieve the goals of recovery of federal and state endangered or threatened species; minimizing the potential for listing of BLM-designated sensitive species; promoting wildlife populations through habitat enhancement projects; and including consideration of crucial habitats of wildlife species in all decisions so that impacts can be avoided, mitigated, or compensated. See also CDCA Plan Wildlife Element Goals 3 and 4 below.

Through the Wildlife Element of the CDCA Plan, the BLM has developed the following five goals for managing and promoting wildlife resources, as well as special status species and their habitats:

1. Avoid, mitigate, or compensate for impacts of conflicting uses on wildlife populations and habitats. Promote wildlife populations through habitat enhancement projects so that balanced ecosystems are maintained and wildlife abundance provides for human enjoyment.

2. Develop and implement detailed plans to provide special management for: 1) areas that contain rare or unique habitat; 2) areas with habitat sensitive to conflicting uses; 3) areas with habitat especially rich in wildlife abundance or diversity; and 4) areas that are good representatives of common habitat types. Many areas falling into these categories contain listed species, which, as indicator species, may become the focus of management.

3. Manage wildlife species on the federal and state lists of threatened and endangered species and their habitats so that their continued existence is not jeopardized. Stabilize and, where possible, improve populations through management and

recovery plans developed and implemented cooperatively with the USFWS and the CDFG.

4. Manage wildlife species officially designated as sensitive by the BLM for California and their habitats so that the potential for federal or state listing is minimized.

5. Include consideration of crucial habitats of sensitive species in all decisions so that impacts are avoided, mitigated, or compensated.

In addition to the goals and objectives, and management actions presented in this section, Vegetative Resource Management and Lands and Realty Management (Sections 2.3.6 and 2.3.17, respectively) also contain goals and objectives and management actions that provide additional wildlife habitat conservation measures.

2.3.7.1 Planning Area-wide

2.3.7.1.1 Goals and Objectives

- Maintain viable populations of all native species throughout the Planning Area.

- Maintain habitat connectivity throughout the Planning Area to limit habitat fragmentation and maintain transfer of genetic material from all sub-populations throughout the Planning Area.

- Promote and maintain healthy key habitats (e.g., microphyll woodlands and psammophytic scrub) and associated wildlife assemblages.

- Promote wildlife resources that would meet conservation, socio-economic (e.g., hunting, watchable wildlife), and tribal needs.

- Provide well-distributed habitat and connectivity corridors capable of supporting self-sustaining populations of interacting groups of priority species for biodiversity and genetic viability.

- Provide suitable habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing trends in abundance of wildlife species.

- Reduce human-caused disturbance to habitats that result in animal mortalities or undesirable effects to populations of priority species during critical times, such as breeding or drought.

- Maintain or restore appropriate amount, distribution, and characteristics of life-stage habitats for general wildlife species. Populations of non-native plants should be reduced or eradicated in areas where their presence threatens the integrity of general wildlife populations.

2.3.7.1.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Restore native species habitat distribution and occurrence, especially for priority species (priority species are those that are recognized as significant for at least one factor: density; diversity; size; public interest; remnant character; or age), conserve biological diversity, maintain genetic integrity and exchange, and improve availability of suitable habitats and habitat linkages. Initiate restoration activities in priority habitats, such as invasive weed removal or native seeding, to move toward desired habitat conditions and provide functional landscapes to sustain populations of fish and wildlife species.

- Authorize reintroductions, transplants, and supplemental stockings (augmentations) of native wildlife populations (as defined in BLM Manual 1745) in current or historic ranges in cooperation with CDFG and/or the USFWS to (1) maintain populations, distributions, and genetic diversity, (2) conserve or recover threatened or endangered species, (3) restore or enhance native wildlife diversity and distribution; and (4) maintain isolated populations.

- Manage invasive and pest species in accordance with applicable BLM policies.

- Coordinate with CDFG to ensure that wildlife guzzlers provide safe access to usable water.

- Pursue land acquisition options (i.e., purchase, exchange, donation, and easement) to consolidate important wildlife habitats.

- Maintain habitat connectivity throughout the Planning Area.

- Allow CDFG to maintain wildlife guzzlers. Consider construction of additional guzzlers upon request by CDFG.

2.3.7.1.3 Management Actions by Alternative

The following management actions presented in Table 2-6 vary by alternative.

TABLE 2-6
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR WILDLIFE RESOURCES BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Maintain current wildlife guzzlers through CDFG and volunteer contributions. Consider construction of new wildlife guzzlers on a case-by-case basis, in coordination with CDFG.	n/a	X		X	X	X	X	X
Maintain current wildlife guzzlers through CDFG and volunteer contributions. No construction of new wildlife waters.	n/a		X					

Note: See Vegetative Resource Management and Lands and Realty Management (Sections 2.3.6 and 2.3.17, respectively) for additional habitat conservation actions that would affect wildlife resources.

2.3.7.2 Priority Wildlife Species

Proposed priority species for the Planning Area include raptors, non-game migratory birds, bats, invertebrates, and game animals.

2.3.7.2.1 Raptors

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain, restore, or enhance nesting and foraging habitat for raptors.
- Provide for safe passage of migrating raptors.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Provide natural or man-made nesting or perching structures in suitable areas to enhance foraging and breeding habitat for raptors as the need arises.
- Require all new structures to be raptor-safe in accordance with the *Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2006* (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 2006) or the current version of this document.
- Apply the BLM wind energy development program policies and BMP relating to raptors from Appendix A in the Wind Energy Development Program ROD (BLM 2005c).

2.3.7.2.2 Non-game Migratory Birds

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain, restore, or enhance nesting, foraging, and migratory stopover habitat consistent with non-game migratory bird habitat management objectives, emphasizing the natural biological diversity.
- Provide for safe passage of non-game migratory birds.
- Minimize habitat fragmentation and provide for migratory corridors.
- Promote socio-economic and recreational values of birds, such as ecotourism.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Prevent or abate the pollution or detrimental alteration of the environment for the benefit of migratory birds, as practicable, through the application of mitigation measures on authorized activities.

- Management actions would be guided by recommendations of comprehensive migratory bird planning efforts such as those completed by California Partners in Flight, including the *Riparian Bird Conservation Plan* (Riparian Habitat Joint Venture 2004), and other plans as available.

- Require all new structures to be bird-safe in accordance with the *Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2006* (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 2006) or the current version of this document.

- Apply the BLM wind energy development program policies and BMP relating to non-migratory game birds from Appendix A in the Wind Energy Development Program ROD (BLM 2005c).

- Provide recreational opportunities for bird watching and photography.

- Monitor new energy development, including power lines and wind turbines or other structures, to better understand risks to non-game migratory birds.

- Require a non-game migratory bird inventory for new utility or energy projects.

2.3.7.2.3 Bats

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain, enhance, and protect bat roost sites and foraging habitat while providing for public safety.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Protect foraging habitat within microphyll woodlands.

- Apply the BLM wind energy development program policies and BMP from Appendix A in the Wind Energy Development Program ROD (BLM 2005c).

- Require a bat inventory for new wind energy projects.

2.3.7.2.4 Invertebrates

Goals and Objectives

- Promote adequate vegetative structure including nectar sources, foraging, and breeding substrate for invertebrate species.

- Protect public health and safety from Africanized bees.

- Promote native pollinator species.

- Protect habitat requirements for insect species of concern found within the Planning Area.

- Maintain and enhance habitat across a wide variety of dune environments.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Avoid adverse impacts to sensitive invertebrate species and associated habitats by developing, modifying, redesigning, mitigating, or abandoning specific projects.

- Restore surface disturbance from discretionary activities, such as ROW construction, with rehabilitation measures including imprinting, contouring, debris and brush replacement, native plant seeding (where appropriate), and invasive plant treatment.

- Restore surface disturbance from illegal trespass activities (not including closure violations) with rehabilitation measures including imprinting, contouring, debris and brush replacement, native planting or seeding (where appropriate), and invasive plant treatment.

2.3.7.2.5 Game Animals (Birds and Mammals)

Resident small game animals (defined in the Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 257) that may be present in the Planning Area include: California quail (*Calllipepla californica*) and varieties thereof; Gambel's (ordesert) quail (*Callipepla gambelii*); mountain quail (*Oreortyx pictus*) and varieties thereof; Hungarian (or: gray) partridge (*Perdix perdix*); red-legged partridge (*Alectoris rufa*), including the chukar and other varieties; ring-necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) and varieties; wild turkey (*Meleagris galiopavo*) of the order Galliformes; and the following game mammals: jackrabbits and varying hares (genus *Lepus*), cottontail rabbits, and brush rabbits (genus *Sylvilagus*).

Resident big game animals (defined in the Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 350) that may be present in the Planning Area include deer (genus *Odocoileus*) and Nelson bighorn sheep (subspecies *Ovis canadensis nelsoni*).

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain, enhance, and protect habitat for native game animal populations.

- Promote the legal pursuit of game.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Prohibit OHV use for the pursuit of game within OHV closed areas.

- Maintain, restore, or enhance water resources for native game animal populations. Water developments would include design features to ensure safety and accessibility to water by desirable wildlife. Where practical, water troughs and tanks would be kept full year-round to provide a continuous water supply for native game animals. Provide reasonable administrative use-related vehicular access by CDFG personnel to game animal water facilities for operation and maintenance activities, which could include cross-country travel along a pre-approved route. Enhancement projects would not be undertaken for non-native birds and mammals.

- Apply the BLM wind energy development program policies and BMPs from Appendix A in the Wind Energy Development Program ROD (2005c).

Management Actions by Alternative

Construction of new wildlife guzzlers would be authorized on a case-by-case basis under Alternatives 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (see Table 2-6). In Alternative 3, there would be no construction of new wildlife guzzlers.

2.3.8 Special Status Species Management

Special status species are fish, wildlife, and plants that require specific conservation measures or management directions due to population or habitat concerns. Special management measures within BLM-administered lands are necessary to reduce or eliminate potential adverse impacts to species or habitats, particularly measures to reduce the likelihood of take of a listed species under the ESA. Special status species fall under the following broad categories: (1) federally listed species under the ESA: threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species and designated or proposed critical habitat; (2) California ESA listed species; and (3) BLM sensitive species. BLM State Directors are directed as follows to designate sensitive species using the criteria found in BLM Manual 6840:

A. Designation of BLM Sensitive Species. State Directors shall designate species within their respective States as BLM sensitive by using the following criteria. For species inhabiting multiple states, State Directors shall coordinate with one another in the designation of BLM sensitive species so that species status is consistent across the species' range on BLM-administered lands, where appropriate. Species designated as BLM sensitive must be native species found on BLM-administered lands for which the BLM has the capability to significantly affect the conservation status of the species through management, and either:

    1. There is information that a species has recently undergone, is undergoing, or is predicted to undergo a downward trend such that the viability of the species or a distinct population segment of the species is at risk across all or a significant portion of the species range, or

2. The species depends on ecological refugia or specialized or unique habitats on BLM-administered lands, and there is evidence that such areas are threatened with alteration such that the continued viability of the species in that area would be at risk.

When a particular species becomes in danger of rapidly dwindling to extinction, BLM will include the species on the BLM Sensitive Species List. BLM maintains Sensitive Species Lists by state. The list is updated regularly and is available on the BLM California website.

Land use plan decisions would be consistent with BLM's mandate to protect and recover species listed under the ESA and would be consistent with objectives and recommended actions in approved recovery plans.

In addition to the ESA, the following laws, regulations, and policies direct the management of special status species on BLM-administered public lands:

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended
- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection of 1940, as amended 1962
- EO 13186—*Conservation of Migratory Birds*
- BLM Manual 6500—*Wildlife, Fish, and Plant Resources*
- BLM Manual 6840—*Special Status Species Management*
- BLM California Manual H-6840.06—*Special Status Plant Management*
- BLM Manual 1737—*Riparian-Wetland Area Management*
- Approved Recovery Plans for federally listed species within the Planning Area (Mojave population of the desert tortoise)

The following are the management goals from the CDCA Plan Wildlife Element that pertain to special status species and their habitats:

- Develop and implement detailed plans to provide special management for:
    - areas that contain rare or unique habitat;
    - areas with habitat sensitive to conflicting uses;
    - areas with habitat especially rich in wildlife abundance or diversity; and
    - areas with good representative of common habitat types.

Many areas falling into these categories contain listed species, which may become the focus of management as indicator species:

- Manage those wildlife species on the federal and state lists of threatened and endangered species and their habitats so that the continued existence of each is not jeopardized. Stabilize and, where possible, improve populations through management and recovery plans developed and implemented cooperatively with the USFWS and the CDFG.

- Manage wildlife species officially designated as sensitive by the BLM for California and their habitats so that the potential for federal or state listing is minimized.

- Include consideration of habitats of sensitive species in all decisions so that impacts are avoided, mitigated, or compensated.

2.3.8.1 Planning Area-wide

2.3.8.1.1 Goals and Objectives

- Maintain, enhance, and restore habitats for the survival and recovery of species listed under the ESA and to prevent proposed or candidate species from becoming listed as endangered or threatened under the ESA. Perform management actions that contribute to recovery and delisting of species listed under the ESA.

- Avoid or minimize activities that would result in the following situations for special status species and associated habitat on BLM-administered public lands: (1) species becoming endangered or extirpated from public lands in the Planning Area; (2) species undergoing significant current or predicted downward trend in habitat capability that would reduce a species' existing distribution; and (3) species undergoing significant current or predicted downward trend in population or density.

- Provide habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing population trends of special status species to ensure persistence. Provide suitable ecological conditions that constitute well-distributed habitats and connective corridors to support reproductive needs and free-flow movements of special status species for population persistence.

- Manage allowable uses to minimize habitat destruction, degradation, and fragmentation to protect special status species. Habitat modifications from land and resource uses would be at levels that do not threaten the persistence of special status species populations.

- Achieve stable or increasing populations of special status plant species over time with adequate pollination, nurse plants, recruitment, and survivorship. Maintain

desired habitat conditions or restore degraded habitats to promote pollinator success and survival.

- Achieve stable or increasing populations of special status animal species over time with adequate recruitment and survivorship. Maintain desired habitat conditions or restore degraded habitats to promote reproductive success and survival.

- Protect the habitat of sensitive species throughout the Planning Area.

2.3.8.1.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Implement species- or habitat-specific goals, objectives, and actions, as applicable, addressed in the approved recovery plans.

- Prohibit activities or projects on BLM-administered lands that would jeopardize the continued existence of federally listed plant and wildlife species, or species proposed for listing.

- Authorize reintroductions, transplants, and supplemental stockings (augmentations) of special status species populations (as defined in BLM Manual 1745) in current or historic ranges in cooperation with CDFG and/or the USFWS to (1) maintain populations, distributions, and genetic diversity, (2) conserve or recover threatened or endangered species, (3) restore or enhance diversity and distribution; and (4) maintain isolated populations.

- Maintain or restore appropriate amount, distribution, and characteristics of life-stage habitats for special status plant species. Populations of non-native plants should be reduced or eradicated in occupied and potential special status plant habitat.

- Apply the BLM wind energy development program policies and BMP from Appendix A in the Wind Energy Development Program ROD (BLM 2005c).

- Prohibit commercial or personal collection of special status species. Allow research collection by permit only.

- Follow prescriptions in recovery plans for federally listed species.

2.3.8.1.3 Management Actions by Alternative

Table 2-7 presents the management actions for special status species that vary by alternative.

TABLE 2-7
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Limit motorized recreation (within corridors or routes) within habitat for the Mojave population of the desert tortoise west of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks.				X				
Prohibit camping within desert tortoise habitat.			X					
Allow camping within designated areas of desert tortoise habitat.				X				X
Open desert tortoise habitat to all motorized recreation.							X	
Limit motorized recreation (corridors or routes) within BLM sensitive species habitat west of the UPRR tracks.				X				
Prohibit camping within BLM sensitive species habitat.			X					
Allow camping within some areas within BLM sensitive species habitat, except microphyll woodlands south of Wash 33 and north of Wash 70.				X				X
Open BLM sensitive species habitat to all motorized recreation.							X	

Note: Special Status Species include BLM sensitive species.

2.3.8.2 Federally Listed Species and Designated Critical Habitat

The ESA of 1973 calls for preparation of recovery plans for threatened and endangered species likely to benefit from the effort, and authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to appoint recovery teams to prepare the plans. The USFWS is the responsible agency for writing and overseeing the recovery plan. A recovery plan establishes recovery goals and objectives, describes site-specific management actions recommended to achieve those goals, and estimates the time and cost required for recovery. A recovery plan is not self-implementing, but presents a set of recommendations for managers and the general public, which are endorsed by an approving official of the DOI. Recovery plans also serve as a source of information on the overall biology and status of and threats to a species. The BLM is using these recovery plans for listed species to address threats and propose conservation measures within the Planning Area.

USFWS has provided a list of two federally listed species known to occur or with the potential to occur within the Planning Area: PMV and the Mojave population of desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*; USFWS 2009).

2.3.8.2.1 Peirson's Milk-vetch (Threatened)

According to the USFWS Pierson's milk-vetch Spotlight Species Action Plan (2009b), the overall recovery objective for the PMV is to provide habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing trends in abundance and survivorship.

Goals and Objectives

- Promote population increase and protect habitat necessary to promote recovery.
- Provide for habitat connectivity between PMV populations throughout the dunes.
- Ensure no adverse modification of critical habitat, as mandated by the ESA.
- Achieve stable or increasing populations of PMV over time with adequate pollination, nurse plants, recruitment, and survivorship. Maintain desired habitat conditions or restore degraded habitats to promote pollinator success and survival.
- Minimize effects resulting from human-caused disturbances.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Promote research activities to further management goals of PMV.
- Implement a monitoring plan for PMV. Analyze the monitoring data to compare the trend in species abundance due to the different types of impacts in each area.

Management Actions by Alternative

Table 2-8 presents the management actions for PMV that vary by alternative.

TABLE 2-8
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR PEIRSON'S MILK-VETCH BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Provide for recovery of PMV through critical habitat protection (see Chapter 3, Section 3.8.1.1).		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Continue current administrative closures limiting motorized recreation, including PMV critical habitat (existing and future designated).		X						
Prohibit motorized recreation within PMV critical habitat.			X		X			X
Allow motorized recreation in some areas of PMV critical habitat (existing and future designated) and prohibit motorized recreation in other areas of critical habitat.						X	X	
Open some areas of critical habitat (existing and future designated) with some limited motorized recreation (seasonal closures, nighttime closures).				X				
Exclude[1] PMV critical habitat from solar energy development.			X					X
Exclude PMV critical habitat from wind energy development.			X					X
Exclude PMV critical habitat from all other types of land use authorization.			X					X
Classify PMV critical habitat as an avoidance[1] area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Classify PMV critical habitat as an avoidance area for wind development.		X		X	X	X		
Classify PMV critical habitat as an avoidance area for all other types of land use authorization.		X		X	X	X		
Open PMV critical habitat to solar development.							X	
Open PMV critical habitat to wind development.							X	
Open PMV critical habitat to all other types of land use authorization.							X	

[1] Avoidance areas are defined in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook as areas to be avoided but which may be available for location rights-of-way with special stipulations. Exclusion areas are defined as areas which are not available for location of rights-of-way under any conditions.

2.3.8.2.2 Mojave Population of the Desert Tortoise (Threatened)

The overall recovery objective for the Mojave population of the desert tortoise is to provide habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing trends in abundance and survivorship of desert tortoise in all recovery units in the Mojave region. The Planning Area partially overlaps with the Eastern Colorado recovery units in southeastern California (BLM 2002a). Recovery goals, objectives, strategies, and delisting criteria are described in the Mojave Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan (USFWS 1994a).

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain and improve habitat for the Mojave population of the desert tortoise.
- Promote population increase and protect habitat necessary to promote recovery.

- Provide for habitat connectivity between desert tortoise populations.
- Establish the goals and criteria for three categories of desert tortoise habitat areas designated in the desert tortoise recovery plan (USFWS 1994a). These categories are:
    - Category I. Maintain stable, viable populations, retain natural shelter sites, protect existing tortoise habitat values, and increase populations where possible.
    - Category II. Maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise values.
    - Category III. Limit tortoise habitat and population declines to the extent possible through mitigating impacts.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

The following management actions would apply to all desert tortoise habitat within the Planning Area and are derived from the Mojave Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan (USFWS 1994a).

- Review land use requests on a case-by-case basis. Requests may be approved, denied, or require mitigation to achieve Goals and Objectives.
- Compensate for loss of desert tortoise habitat in accordance with the Desert Tortoise Compensation Team report (1991).
- Limit activities that would fragment or further isolate existing Mojave populations of desert tortoise (e.g., canals, highways).
- Reduce the attraction of predators through proper management of garbage.
- Reduce take of desert tortoises, by injury or death, through proper mitigation measures.

Management Actions by Alternative

See Table 2-7 above for management actions by alternative for the desert tortoise.

2.3.8.3 State-listed Species

The BLM Special Status Species policy provides for cooperative relationships with states for purposes of conservation of sensitive species and compliance with the ESA.

There are four state-listed species found within the Planning Area: Algodones Dunes sunflower (*Helianthus niveus* var. *tephrodes*), Wiggins' croton (*Croton wigginsii*), Gila

woodpecker (*Melanerpes uropygialis)*, and Arizona Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii* var. *arizonae*). These four species are treated as BLM sensitive species according to BLM policy.

2.3.8.3.1 Algodones Dunes Sunflower (State of California Endangered)

Algodones Dunes sunflower was listed by the State of California as endangered in 1979. The Algodones Dunes sunflower is a rare perennial plant that lives in shifting sand habitats in the highest dunes. The BLM could adopt and implement, if consistent with BLM policies, conservation strategies outlined by the CDFG for this species. Overall, the conservation objective is to provide habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing trends in abundance of the Algodones Dunes sunflower.

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain suitable habitat of sufficient quality and quantity that could support the Algodones Dunes sunflower.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Implement a monitoring plan for the Algodones Dunes sunflower. Analyze the monitoring data to compare the trend in species abundance due to the different types of impacts in each area.

Management Actions by Alternative

See Table 2-7 above for management actions by alternative for sensitive and special status species.

2.3.8.3.2 Wiggins' Croton (State of California Rare, CNPS-2)

Wiggins' croton was recognized by the State of California as rare (California Native Plant Society [CNPS]-2) in January 1982 (California Natural Diversity Database [CNDDB] 2001). Wiggins' croton is a perennial plant in the Euphorbiaceae family that thrives in shifting sand habitats. The BLM could adopt and implement, if consistent with BLM policies, conservation strategies outlined by the CDFG for this species. Overall, the conservation objective is to provide habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing trends in abundance of Wiggins' croton.

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain suitable habitat of sufficient quality and quantity with adequate patch sizes that could support Wiggins' croton.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Analyze impacts of all projects occurring within occupied Wiggins' croton habitat and require that projects mitigate the impacts as appropriate.

2.3.8.3.3 Gila Woodpecker (State of California Endangered)

The Gila woodpecker was listed by the State of California as endangered in 1988. The Gila woodpecker is found in Sonoran desert habitats where it nests in saguaro cacti as well as large mesquite and palo verde trees. The BLM could adopt and implement, if consistent with BLM policies, conservation strategies outlined by the CDFG for this species. Overall, the conservation objective is to provide habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing trends in abundance of Gila woodpecker.

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain suitable habitat of sufficient quality and quantity with adequate patch sizes that could support Gila woodpeckers.

- Maintain microphyll woodlands with large trees and sufficient recruitment that could support Gila woodpeckers.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Analyze impacts of all projects occurring within occupied Gila woodpecker habitat and require that projects mitigate the impacts as appropriate.

Management Actions by Alternative

See Table 2-7 above for management actions by alternative for sensitive and special status species.

2.3.8.3.4 Arizona Bell's Vireo (State of California Endangered)

Arizona Bell's vireo was listed by the State of California as endangered in 1988. The Arizona Bell's vireo is a rare subspecies of the Bell's vireo that inhabits dense lowland shrub and mesquite brushlands. The BLM could adopt and implement, if consistent with BLM policies, conservation strategies outlined by the CDFG for this species. Overall, the conservation objective is to provide habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing trends in abundance of Arizona Bell's vireo.

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain suitable habitat of sufficient quality and quantity with adequate patch sizes that could support vireos.

- Maintain dense mesquite patches in microphyll woodlands that would support vireos.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Analyze impacts to the Arizona Bell's vireo for all projects occurring within occupied Arizona Bell's vireo habitat and require that projects mitigate the impacts as appropriate.

Management Actions by Alternative

See Table 2-7 above for management actions by alternative for sensitive and special status species.

2.3.8.4 BLM Sensitive Species

The BLM sensitive species identified in the Planning Area are as follows: Munz's cholla (*Opuntia munzii*), giant Spanish needle (*Palafoxia arida*), sand food (*Pholisma sonorae*), Algodones dunes sunflower, Wiggins croton (*Croton wigginsii*), Orocopia sage (*Salvia greatei*), spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*), California leaf-nosed bat (*Macrotus californicus)*, cave myotis (*Myotis velifer*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Plecotus townsendii*), Arizona Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii arizonae*), Gila woodpecker (*Melanerpes uropygialis*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), LeConte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*), lowland (San Sebastian) leopard frog (*Rana yavapaiensis*), Couch's spade-foot toad (*Scaphiopus couchi*), flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*), and Colorado fringed-toed lizard (*Uma notata)*.

Per policy detailed in California BLM Manual Supplement 6840.06, all CNPS List 1B plant species that occur on BLM lands are considered to be BLM sensitive species (see Section 3.7—Special Status Species). Species that are also listed by either the federal government or State of California are discussed above.

2.3.8.4.1 Goals and Objectives

- Protect habitats of sensitive plant and wildlife species on BLM-administered lands to prevent the species from becoming listed under the ESA.

2.3.8.4.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Allow collection of seeds of native plants to be used in rehabilitation and restoration activities.

- Implement and manage consistently with the Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Range-wide Management Strategy (Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Interagency Coordinating Committee 2003).

- Implement a monitoring plan for BLM sensitive plants. Analyze the monitoring data to compare the trend in species abundance due to the different types of impacts in each area.

- Implement a monitoring plan for BLM sensitive wildlife species. Analyze the monitoring data to compare the trend in species abundance due to the different types of impacts in each area.

- Implement a monitoring plan for the flat-tailed horned lizard. Analyze the monitoring data to compare the trend in species abundance due to the different types of impacts in each area.

- Acquire lands from willing sellers within the East Mesa Management Area.

- Protect habitat for BLM sensitive species whenever possible.

- Implement a monitoring plan for sand food (*Pholisma sonorae)*.

Management Actions by Alternative

See Table 2-7 above for management actions by alternative for sensitive species.

2.3.9 Wildland Fire Management

The BLM coordinates with other agencies to manage fire in accordance with the nationwide BLM fire policy and the National Fire Plan. This integrates fire and fuels management with other land and resource management activities to benefit natural resources and implement multiple-use on BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area.

The CDCA Plan, as part of the Multiple Use Class Guidelines, provides management direction for wildland fire management. Fire suppression measures will be taken in accordance with specific fire management plans subject to such conditions as authorized officer deems necessary, such as use of motorized vehicle, aircraft, and fire-retardant chemicals.

The Planning Area is located in the Palm Springs–South Coast El Centro Fire Management Zone and the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Fire Management Unit. BLM has the responsibility to provide a fire agency representative, fire prevention, law enforcement, and resource management on BLM-administered lands. BLM works to minimize impacts to resources from suppression activities and reduce rehabilitation costs from fire damage. The BLM identifies wilderness, WSAs, and ACECs as special management units requiring additional consideration to protect the resources on these lands. The dunes are dominated by psammophytic scrub and creosote scrub and also

contain scattered stands of microphyll woodland vegetation, some of which are thick with closed canopies. These vegetation communities are not considered to be fire-adapted and must be managed accordingly.

2.3.9.1 Goals and Objectives

- Protect human life (both firefighters and public) and communities, property, and the natural resources on which they depend. Firefighter and public safety are the highest priority in all fire management activities.

- The management response to wildfire is appropriate to the values, risks, and other factors present. The management response may vary from aggressive suppression action to those actions that allow fire to function in its natural ecological role.

2.3.9.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Implement fuels reduction programs where needed, with wildland fuels decreased and maintained at a manageable level, creating conditions conducive to safe, efficient, and effective firefighting. Fire and fuels management treatments may include fire suppression, prescribed fire, and non-fire treatments (manual, chemical, mechanical, or biological treatments). Treat non-native invasive species that constitute significant fuel load and fire threat directly by using Integrated Pest Management or management through fire breaks and other tactics.

- Identify, prioritize, and plan fuels reduction projects using a uniform system for determining wildland fire risk in wildland–urban interface (e.g., Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategy).

- Identify and implement post-fire stabilization and rehabilitation actions in burned areas to restore a functional landscape to meet the natural resource management objectives.

- Apply the minimum impact management tactics, identified in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations, in the wilderness, when wildland fire suppression is required.

- Consider the desired conditions and management prescriptions in implementing fire management activities for ACECs (see Section 2.3.13.3 ACECs of this chapter).

- Utilize wildland fire suppression methods with lesser ground disturbance to minimize potential adverse impacts on special status species, critical habitat, desired plant communities, and cultural resources. Provide an on-site resource advisor to consult with the wildland fire responders on the location of sensitive resources and provide input to minimize impacts to those resources. When feasible, use of fire suppression

techniques that minimize ground-disturbing impacts is desirable; however, reduction of total acreage lost to fire, especially in critical habitat, through the use of mobile attack with engines, fireline construction with bulldozers, aerial fire retardant, or other necessary techniques is appropriate and requested.

- Use fire retardants or chemicals adjacent to waterways in accordance with the *Environmental Guidelines for Delivery of Retardant or Foam near Waterways: Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations* (National Interagency Fire Center 2009).

- Use wildland fire to achieve resource benefits whenever possible

2.3.10 Cultural Resource Management

The management of cultural resources on BLM land must be in compliance with several federal laws, including the Antiquities Act of 1906; the NHPA of 1966, as amended; the NEPA of 1969; EO 11593—*Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment*; FLPMA of 1976; the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978; the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993; the Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979; the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990; EO 13007—*Indian Sacred Sites*; and EO 13287—*Preserve America*. BLM also manages cultural resources in accordance with the National Programmatic Agreement (Among the Bureau of Land Management Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers Regarding the Manner in Which the BLM will Meet Its Responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act) of 2012. In addition, the BLM manages its cultural resources according to BLM Manuals 8100 through 8170, and in accordance with the BLM-California SHPO Protocol Agreement of 2007, as amended. Locations of cultural resource sites are to be kept confidential with the exception of public use sites.

The following are management goals from the CDCA Plan's Cultural Resource Element:

- Broaden the archaeological and historical knowledge of the CDCA through continuing inventory efforts and the use of existing data.

- Continue the effort to identify the full array of the CDCA's cultural resources.

- Preserve and protect representative samples of the full array of the CDCA's cultural resources.

- Ensure that cultural resources are given full consideration in land use planning and management decisions, and ensure that BLM-authorized actions avoid inadvertent impacts.

- Ensure proper data recovery of significant (National Register quality) cultural resources where adverse impacts can be avoided.

2.3.10.1 Goals and Objectives

- Identify, preserve, and protect significant cultural resources, districts, and landscapes and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations.

- Identify priority geographic areas for new field inventory, based upon a probability for unrecorded significant resources.

- Enhance public understanding of and appreciation for cultural resources through educational outreach and heritage tourism opportunities.

- Evaluate identified cultural resources under the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Eligible resources would be formally nominated for listing to the NRHP, as appropriate.

- Promote new survey efforts on an ongoing basis, utilizing partners where appropriate.

- Maintain viewsheds of important cultural resources whose settings contribute significantly to their scientific, public, traditional, or conservation values.

- Provide and encourage cultural resources research opportunities that would contribute to the understanding of the ways humans have used and influenced natural systems and processes.

- Seek to reduce imminent threats, and direct and indirect impacts to cultural resources, or potential conflict with other resource uses.

- Increase BLM nation-to-nation consultation and coordination with Native American Tribes.

2.3.10.2 Management Actions by Alternative

2.3.10.2.1 Alternative 1—No Action

Under Alternative 1 the existing decisions of the 1987 RAMP would continue to be implemented. These are:

- Provide for systematic monitoring of sensitive biological and cultural resources and recreational use, and development of management guidelines for resource protection.

- Minimize potential conflicts between recreational use and other resource uses of the recreation area.

- Implement Plank Road ACEC Management Plan (Issue 3, Measure 3-6).

2.3.10.2.2 Alternatives 2 through 8

- Current legal, regulatory, and policy direction concerning cultural resources exists to protect and preserve these national heritage assets, as well as support development of literature, interpretive sites, and other forms of public education designed to increase knowledge, understanding, and enjoyment of these irreplaceable resources. Legal protection, physical preservation and restoration, documentation, and access by scientists and the general public are regulated by federal law. The electronic management and archiving of cultural data are vital to the management of these resources. The management actions presented here are a result of the need to update the existing plan and incorporate current legislation and policy direction for the management of cultural resources. These management actions apply to cultural resources in the Planning Area under Alternatives 2 through 8.

- Maintain current cultural resource data in a geographic information system (GIS) format and increase knowledge of cultural resources within the Planning Area through proactive surveys. The inventory would include a prioritized list (high/medium/low sensitivity) of areas for future inventory—based on sensitivity and the likelihood of significant, unrecorded sites. Inventory strategies for un-surveyed areas would be continually refined.

- Work cooperatively with the California SHPO on data sharing and information management, and the promotion and enhancement of public education, including Archaeological Awareness Week/Historic Preservation Month, outreach, and stewardship programs.

- Provide for and/or increase interpretive educational opportunities at selected cultural and historic sites, including the Plank Road (CA-IMP-4764H). Work with communities, Tribes, interested individuals, and other agencies to enhance public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of cultural resources.

- Implement protection measures to stop, limit, or repair damage to sites that are on or eligible for the NRHP. A variety of protection measures, described in BLM Manual 8140, may be used to protect the integrity of sites at risk and would include signing, fencing or barriers, trash removal, erosion control, backfilling, repairing, shoring up or stabilizing structures, restricting uses and access, and closures. Where feasible, acquire non-BLM-administered properties within the Planning Area that contain significant cultural resources including, but not limited to, those properties listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP.

- Manage spiritually significant and traditional cultural properties in consultation with Native American Tribes, accommodate Tribal access to spiritually significant and traditional cultural properties, and prevent physical damage or intrusions that might impede their use by religious practitioners (pursuant to EO 13007 and American Indian Religious Freedom Act). The locations of spiritually significant and traditional cultural properties and other places of traditional or religious importance to Native American Tribes would be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

- Coordinate with Native Americans to manage harvesting areas for the collection of medicinal herbs, ceremonial herbs, other vegetation, and/or minerals for traditional or ceremonial use (see Section 2.3.6.4—Vegetative Use Authorization, of this chapter for more information).

- Evaluate and allocate cultural properties (including cultural landscapes) to one of six uses as outlined in BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) and BLM-IB No. 2002-101—*Cultural Resource Considerations in Resource Management Plans*.

2.3.10.3 Cultural Use Allocation

The BLM evaluates cultural resources according to their current and potential uses (BLM Manual Section 8110 for Cultural Resources). Cultural resources are allocated to one or more of the following use categories: Scientific Use, Public Use, Traditional Use, Conservation for Future Use, Experimental Use, and Discharged from Management. A site may be allocated to more than one use category.

Table 2-9 depicts typical use allocations for the various types of cultural resources found within the Planning Area. Scientific Use is defined as resources preserved until research potential is realized; Conservation for Future Use is defined as resources preserved until conditions for use are met; Traditional Use is defined as resources designated for long-term preservation; Public Use is defined as resources designated for long-term preservation and on-site interpretation; Experimental Use is defined as resources that will be protected until used; and Discharged from Management is defined as resources with no use after recordation and not to be preserved. The Plank Road (CA-IMP-4764H) is allocated to the Public Use and Conservation for Future Use categories. No cultural resources are allocated to the Discharged from Management category at this time.

TABLE 2-9
USE ALLOCATIONS FOR CULTURAL PROPERTIES

Cultural Site Types	Scientific Use	Public Use	Traditional Use	Conservation for Future Use	Experimental Use
Lithic Scatters	X		X	X	
Ceramic Scatters	X		X	X	
Habitation and Temporary Campsites	X		X	X	
Ground Stone Scatters	X		X	X	
Cairn and Rock Alignments	X		X	X	
Trails	X		X	X	
Cleared Circle and Rock Rings	X		X	X	
Human Remains			X	X	
Historic Trash Scatter and Dumps	X			X	X
Military Encampments	X			X	
Historic Roads	X	X		X	
Canals	X	X		X	
Railroads	X	X		X	
Transmission Lines	X	X		X	

Sites within the Planning Area would typically be allocated to one or more of the use categories presented in the table, although specific allocations of individual sites may be reevaluated and revised based on changing circumstances, or if any new or existing information regarding site attributes comes to light (e.g., site access, physical setting, site complexity, Native American consultation, and impacts to the site). In addition, all sites within the ACECs and wilderness would be allocated to the Conservation for Future Use and Traditional Use categories and would be managed appropriately for that class.

2.3.11 Paleontological Resource Management

Paleontological resources found on public lands are recognized by BLM as constituting a fragile and nonrenewable scientific record of the history of life on Earth. They therefore represent an important component of America's natural heritage. All lands within the Planning Area have been classified as containing vertebrate fossils (see Section 3.10).

The BLM manages paleontological resources principally under the following authorities: Title VI, Subtitle D of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act, known by its popular name, the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (123 Stat. 1172; 16 USC 470aaa et seq.); BLM Manual 8270—*Paleontological Resources Management*; BLM Handbook 8270-1—*General Procedural Guidance for Paleontological Resources Management*; FLPMA of 1976; NEPA of 1969; the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988; and various sections of BLMs regulations found in CFR Title 43. BLM policy laid forth in

these guidelines promotes the scientific, educational, and recreational uses of fossils on public lands, mitigates resource conflicts, and develops strategies to regularly monitor public lands where important paleontological localities have been identified.

The CDCA Plan's Cultural Resource Element includes management goals for paleontological resources along with those for cultural resources. The following CDCA management goals apply to the protection of paleontological resources:

- Ensure that paleontological resources are given full consideration in land-use planning and management decisions.
- Preserve and protect a representative sample of the full array of the CDCA's paleontological resources.
- Ensure proper data recovery of significant paleontological resources where adverse impacts cannot be avoided or otherwise mitigated.

2.3.11.1 Goals and Objectives

- Protect and conserve significant paleontological resources as they are discovered on public lands.
- Manage paleontological resources in ways that prioritize research needs, facilitate educational and recreational needs, and protect important sites.
- Develop specific objectives and management actions for fossil localities, when paleontological resources are discovered in the Planning Area.

2.3.11.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Evaluate paleontological resources as they are discovered, considering their scientific, educational, and recreational values. Identify appropriate objectives, management actions, and allowable uses for fossil localities as they are found.
- Restrict the collection of all vertebrate fossils and invertebrate and plant fossils of paleontological interest to legitimate scientific or educational uses in accordance with permitting procedures.
- Allow recreational collecting of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources, in accordance with the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act.
- Require immediate notification should paleontological resources be encountered during project surface-disturbing activities, and cease work in the area of the discovery. Work may not resume until the BLM issues a written authorization to proceed.

Although all lands within the Planning Area have been classified as potential fossil yield classification Class 2 (low likelihood for sensitive fossils), a field survey by a qualified paleontologist may be required if future information determines or indicates the presence of important paleontological resources prior to surface-disturbing activities. Management prescriptions for resource preservation and conservation through controlled access or special management designation could be considered. Surface-disturbing activities may require an assessment in Class 2 areas to determine further courses of action. Assessment or mitigation in Class 1 areas would not be required except in very rare circumstances.

2.3.12 Visual Resource Management

The BLM prepares and maintains on a continuing basis an inventory of visual values on all public lands in accordance with the VRM system (BLM 1984a). The VRM system provides a way to identify, evaluate, and determine the appropriate levels of management of scenic values. The inventory of visual values has been documented for the BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area and is described in Chapter 3, Section 3.12—Visual Resources. The inventory serves as the basis for the designation of VRM Classes I-IV, which takes into account other resource uses on public lands within the Planning Area. The VRM classes are best defined by their goals and objectives, which are described below. The overall goal of VRM analysis is to minimize visual impacts through development of mitigating measures.

The following criteria were used to determine the proposed VRM Class designations for the various RAMP alternatives:

- The overall management emphasis intended for each alternative
- Recognition of all applicable special designations and all land use decisions
- Assertion that other management activities and land uses proposed may be achieved within the applicable VRM Class
- Use of the least restrictive class that still achieves stated goals and objectives

The overarching management goals for visual resources in the project area are established by the CDCA Plan's Recreation Element, as follows:

- The CDCA has a superb variety of scenic values. The public considers these scenic values a significant resource. The BLM recognizes these values as a definable resource and an important recreation experience. These visual resources will receive consideration in BLM resource management decisions. Many management activities involve alteration of the natural character of the landscape to some degree; the BLM will take the following actions to effectively manage for these activities:

1) The appropriate levels of management, protection, and rehabilitation on all public lands in the CDCA will be identified, commensurate with visual resource management objectives in the multiple-use class guidelines.

2) Proposed activities will be evaluated to determine the extent of change created in any given landscape and to specify appropriate design or mitigation measures using the BLM's contrast rating process.

2.3.12.1 Goals and Objectives

The RAMP alternatives would set landscape classes ranging from Class I to IV, and all future projects and actions would adhere to the following VRM class objectives as appropriate:

Class I Objective. The objective of this class is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.

Class II Objective. The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Class III Objective. The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention, but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Class IV Objective. The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repetition of the basic elements.

2.3.12.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Incorporate design considerations to minimize potential impacts to public lands' visual values into all surface-disturbing activities, regardless of size. Proponents would be encouraged to meet with the BLM personnel to discuss and provide input

during the initial planning and design phase to minimize costly redesign and mitigation at a later time.

- Evaluate proposed surface-disturbing activities in accordance with BLM VRM Handbook H-8431-1 Visual Contract Rating. Conduct a visual contrast analysis to ensure that projects meet the VRM class requirements for that area. This visual contrast analysis from Key Observation Points (KOPs) would consider the following factors: distance (between project and KOPs), angle of observation, length of time the proposed project would be in view, relative size or scale, season of use, light conditions, recovery time, spatial relationships, atmospheric conditions, and motion.

- Use visual resource design techniques and BMP (summarized in Appendix C) to mitigate the potential for short- and long-term visual impacts from other uses and activities until demonstrated to meet the VRM class objectives.

2.3.12.3 Management Actions by Alternative

The Planning Area was not inventoried for visual resource values when preparing the current ISD RAMP and CDCA Plan. The 1987 ISD RAMP contains VRM Class designations in the environmental assessment; however, no maps or classes were specifically identified. The approximate acreages of these VRM classes are: VRM Class II 145,771 acres; VRM Class III 29,580 acres; and VRM Class IV 3,200 acres. Therefore, under Alternative 1, the Planning Area would retain these VRM designations.

A hierarchical approach was utilized in assigning VRM Classes for Alternatives 2 through 8. First, in accordance with BLM's national policies, wilderness would be designated Class I under these alternatives. Wilderness requires special consideration for the protection of the visual values due to management objectives to preserve the natural landscape setting. Lands immediately adjacent to wilderness would be designated Class II.

A Class II designation would be assigned to lands managed for recreation. These lands are managed to provide a relatively high level of natural landscape setting, while allowing for certain recreational components.

The BLM would encourage retrofitting of existing facilities to comply with the VRM Class objectives for that area by working in partnership with existing ROW holders (such as communication sites). Incorporate mitigation measures, such as repainting existing facilities, and carefully locating and designing new facilities (such as by using topographic screening) to minimize their contrast with the characteristic landscape.

ACECs would be designated as Class II or in some cases as Class III. Class III and IV designations were assigned to areas with high potential for renewable resource uses,

areas that would be managed for high recreational value, and other areas which would continue to be managed primarily for habitat values, regardless of scenic quality.

VRM class designations vary by alternative, as shown in Table 2-10. VRM Class designations by alternative are presented on Maps 2-2 through 2-4.

TABLE 2-10
VRM CLASSES BY ALTERNATIVE

VRM Class	Alternative (acres)							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
I (acres)[1]	n/a	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098
II (acres)	145,771	104,739	173,794	104,739	104,739	104,739	16,031	104,739
III (acres)	29,580	69,055	15,039	69,055	69,055	69,055	88,708	69,055
IV (acres)	3,200	15,039	0	15,039	15,039	15,039	84,094	15,039
Total	178,551[2]	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930

[1]The acreages identified for VRM Class I represent the digital boundaries of the wilderness. These acreages may not coincide completely with those designated by Congress.

[2]Alternative 1 reflects approximate VRM class acreage from the 1987 RAMP and does not include changes in land tenure since 1987.

2.3.13 Special Designations and Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Special Designations for BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area include the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness and three ACECs (Maps 2-5 and 2-6). In addition, the Planning Area has been inventoried for lands with wilderness characteristics (see Chapter 3, Section 3.13 Special Designations). For lands identified with wilderness characteristics, one or more alternatives include management actions to protect wilderness characteristics present on these parcels.

Wilderness is designated by Congress. No changes to the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness are proposed in this RAMP. Through the planning process, the BLM may designate ACECs and identify lands with wilderness characteristics following the criteria outlined in law (FLPMA), regulations (43 CFR 1610.7-2), and policy (Handbook 1601; IM 2011-54).

The CDCA Plan, under the ACEC Program, provides the following management goals:

- Identify and protect the significant natural and cultural resources requiring special management attention found in BLM-administered lands in the CDCA.

- Provide for other uses in the designated areas, compatible with the protection and enhancement of the significant natural and cultural resources.

- Systematically monitor the preservation of the significant natural and cultural resources on BLM-administered lands, and the compatibility of other allowable uses with these resources.

2.3.13.1 Wilderness

The North Algodones Dunes Wilderness includes 26,098 acres of BLM-administered public lands. This wilderness was established through the CDPA of 1994. Wilderness is designated by Congress and wilderness areas are managed according to the Wilderness Act (16 USC 1131-1136, 78 Stat. 890), specific legislation such as the CDPA of 1994, regulations for wilderness management at 43 CFR 6300, Wilderness Management Policy (BLM 1981), BLM manuals 8560 and 8561, and BLM Handbook H-8560-1. This Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment will not address changing or eliminating the existing wilderness boundary or allowing motorized vehicles or other use of mechanical transportation in wilderness not already authorized. Only Congress can change the boundaries of designated wilderness.

2.3.13.1.1 Goals and Objectives

- Provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character. The area's naturalness and untrammeled condition, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, and any ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historic value would be managed so that they remain unimpaired.

- Meet minimum requirements necessary for the administration of the area for the purpose of the Wilderness Act and the CDPA (including measures required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area).

2.3.13.1.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

Continue to provide monitoring, signing, and restoration as necessary.

Allow proposed activities (e.g., surface-disturbing activities) in wilderness per the Wilderness Act or CDPA if:

- the proposed action is conforming or nonconforming by accepted use specifically permitted in wilderness areas by the Wilderness Act and subsequent laws in a manner that will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of an area's wilderness character;

- the proposed activity complies with Section 106 of the NHPA including documentation and—where applicable—consultation has been completed with the SHPO and federally recognized tribes; and

- the proposed activity complies with Section 7 of the ESA and that compliance has been completed and documented in consultation with USFWS.

Some relevant management provisions provided for by law or policy for these areas are:

- Wilderness is withdrawn from mineral entry, mineral leasing, and mineral sales.
- No use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment, or other form of mechanical transport.
- No structure or installation within these areas.
- Administrative structures (e.g., trail markers or informational kiosks) and use of vehicles and structures would be the minimum necessary for the administration of these areas.
- Prescribed fire may be used: 1) to reintroduce or maintain the natural condition of a fire-dependent ecosystem, 2) to restore fire where past strict fire control measures had interfered with natural ecological processes, 3) where a primary value of a given wilderness would be perpetuated as a result of burning, or 4) where it would perpetuate threatened and endangered species (MS-8560.35).

2.3.13.1.3 Management Actions by Alternatives

Management actions as they differ by alternative for wilderness are shown in Table 2-11.

TABLE 2-11
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR WILDERNESS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Expand access by improving staging areas at wilderness access points.	X			X	X		X	X
Continue current level of access at wilderness access points.		X	X			X		
Provide new informational kiosks at wilderness access points.	X			X	X			X
Maintain current informational kiosks at wilderness access points.		X	X			X	X	

2.3.13.2 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Lands outside of designated wilderness or WSAs are assessed during the planning process to determine if they possess one or more wilderness characteristics, such as naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and/or primitive and unconfined recreation. This inventory and evaluation meets the requirements of FLPMA, Title II, sections 201 and 202. Plan decisions can also include a land use allocation requiring these lands be

managed to protect one or more wilderness characteristics (see the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook 1601-1, Appendix C, subparagraph K, Wilderness Characteristics).

Management of lands with wilderness characteristics is part of BLM's multiple use mandate and is recognized within the spectrum of resource values and uses within the ISD Planning Area. Lands with wilderness characteristics are defined for this RAMP as areas:

- having been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of human work substantially unnoticeable;
- having outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; and potentially containing ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

The BLM-administered public lands in the Planning Area have been inventoried for lands with wilderness characteristics for this Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment and Final EIS. This inventory found that 42,083 acres of BLM-administered public lands possess one or more wilderness characteristics and are contained in a parcel identified as Wilderness Characteristic Unit (WCU) 1. See Section 3.13.2 for a summary of the inventory process and the results of the wilderness characteristics inventory.

2.3.13.2.1 Goals and Objectives

Lands identified as possessing wilderness characteristics would be managed to protect their wilderness characteristics and for the use and enjoyment of the public under one or more alternatives. In addition, these lands could augment multiple-use management of adjacent and nearby lands through the protection of wildlife habitat, natural plant communities, and similar natural values.

2.3.13.2.2 Management Actions by Alternative

Alternatives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8

- Continue current management of the 42,083 acres identified as WCU 1 (see Chapter 3.0 for additional information).
- Allow motorized recreation per OHV use allocations.
- Protect resource values that are present on the lands through prescriptions of the recreation management zones for each alternative.

Alternative 3

- Consider on a case-by-case basis open, closed, or limited to motorized use as needed for administrative use, homeland security, or other law enforcement and fire suppression or prevention actions.

- Monitor conditions and uses in and around lands with wilderness characteristics. Identify actions or uses that impair wilderness characteristics and take actions to repair or minimize impairments (e.g., signage and restoration).

Management actions as they differ by alternative are shown in Table 2-12.

TABLE 2-12
MANAGEMENT OF LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
WCU 1 would be managed under the recreation management zone for the alternative.	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
WCU 1 would be managed to protect wilderness characteristics present on the unit.			X					
WCU 1 would be withdrawn from mineral entry and closed to mineral sale or leasing.			X					
WCU 1 would be a right-of-way exclusion or avoidance area.			X					
WCU 1 would be closed or limited to OHV use.			X					
WCU 1 would be designated as VRM Class II.			X					

2.3.13.3 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

The BLM is evaluating three pre-existing ACECs under various alternatives in the Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment (see Maps 2-5 through 2-6). The Proposed Plan and CDCA Plan Amendment (Alternative 8) would retain the 416-acre Plank Road ACEC to protect cultural resources and other resource values identified in the Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment (note that the Plank Road was incorrectly described as 298 acres in the Draft RAMP). The Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment would reduce the East Mesa ACEC from 6,454 acres to 5,802 acres in order to eliminate overlap with the ISD SRMA east of the New Coachella Canal. The East Mesa ACEC would continue to protect biological resources and other resource values identified in the Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan. The Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment would also remove the North Algodones Dunes ACEC, which encompasses 25,756 acres, to eliminate conflicting management prescriptions between this ACEC and the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness. Limitations on use of public lands within the Plank Road ACEC include restrictions on wind and solar energy development, as well as geothermal leasing. Limitations on use of public lands within the East Mesa ACEC include restrictions on wind and solar energy development as well as geothermal leasing that includes surface occupancy.

The guidance for ACEC designation is included in FLPMA and the BLM planning regulations. ACECs must meet the relevance and importance criteria in 43 CFR 1610.7-2(b) and must require special management (43 CFR 1601.0-5[a]) to:

- Protect the area and prevent irreparable damage to resources or natural systems.
- Protect life and promote safety in areas where natural hazards exist.

Areas qualifying for consideration as ACECs must have substantial significance and value, including qualities of more than local significance and special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern. The values for which ACECs are designated are considered the highest and best use for those lands and protection of those values would take precedence over multiple uses.

2.3.13.3.1 Goals and Objectives

ACECs would provide protection for relevant and important special status species, wildlife, scenic, and significant cultural resources values.

The Plank Road ACEC was established to protect the remaining portions of the Plank Road, which are extremely susceptible to damage, particularly from OHV recreation.

The East Mesa ACEC contains wildlife values which require special management attention (a significant portion of flat-tailed horned lizard habitat is located in the ACEC), and cultural resources requiring special management attention may also be present. These values are potentially threatened by visitor use and energy development within the ACEC and were considered in need of protection.

2.3.13.3.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Ensure land use authorizations approved in ACECs are consistent with the actions presented in Section 2.3.17—Lands and Realty Management of this chapter.
- Ensure mineral management actions authorized in ACECs are consistent with the actions presented in Section 2.3.17—Lands and Realty Management of this chapter.
- Retain the ACEC in public ownership and seek to acquire non-federal lands and interests in lands within the ACECs from willing sellers by purchase, exchange, or donation. Future acquisitions of in-holdings and edgeholdings would be managed in accordance with the designated ACEC. See Land Tenure in Section 2.3.17.1 for additional information.
- Allow treatment for hazardous fuels and non-native invasive or pest species.
- Prohibit wood collection in all ACECs.

- Allow traditional use by Native Americans consistent with Vegetative Use Authorization (see Section 2.3.6.4—Vegetative Use Authorization of this chapter).
- Monitor resources within the ACECs to detect change and prevent future deterioration.
- Perform restoration treatments where damage has occurred or where it will reduce vehicle incursions.

2.3.13.3.3 Designations of ACECs by Alternative

Potential ACEC designations by alternative are quantified below in Table 2-13 and shown in Maps 2-5 and 2-6. The range of alternatives is based on the following:

TABLE 2-13
ACECS BY ALTERNATIVE (ACRES)

ACEC	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Plank Road	416	416	416	416	416	416	416	416
East Mesa	6,454	6,454	5,802	5,802	5,802	5,802	5,802	5,802
North Algodones Dunes	25,756	25,756	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total[1]	32,623	32,623	6,218	6,218	6,218	6,218	6,218	6,218

[1]ACECs may include private in-holdings located within the boundaries of the ACECs. BLM's land-use decisions and management actions only apply to BLM-administered lands within the ACECs. Acres presented include BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area only. Inconsistencies in acres may be due to GIS data and rounding.

Alternatives 1 and 2

The Plank Road, East Mesa, and North Algodones Dunes ACECs remain as they were originally designated.

Alternatives 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8

The original North Algodones Dunes ACEC is removed because it overlaps the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness. BLM strives to manage the area to the highest protection possible and to avoid administrative overlap. The Plank Road ACEC remains as it was originally designated. The East Mesa ACEC would be reduced from 6,454 acres to 5,802 acres under these alternatives in order to eliminate overlap with the ISD SRMA east of the New Coachella Canal. The canal results in a barrier to travel for the flat-tailed horned lizards, the area provides only marginal habitat for this species, and the area receives a high level of OHV recreation.

Table 2-14 provides the management actions by alternatives for ACECs.

TABLE 2-14
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR ACECS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Reduce acreage of East Mesa ACEC in order to eliminate overlap with the ISD SRMA.			X	X	X	X	X	X
Exclude ACEC(s) from solar energy development.[1]			X					X
Exclude ACECs from wind energy development.			X					X
Classify ACECs as avoidance areas for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Classify ACECs as avoidance areas for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Open ACECs to solar energy development.							X	
Open ACECs to wind energy development.							X	
Classify ACECs as avoidance areas for all land use authorizations other than for solar and wind development.				X	X	X		

[1]Avoidance areas are defined in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook as areas to be avoided but which may be available for location rights-of-way with special stipulations. Exclusion areas are defined as areas which are not available for location of rights-of-way under any conditions.

2.3.14 Mineral Resource Management

The BLM manages mineral resources in accordance with BLM's National Mineral Policy, General Mining Law of 1872, as amended, various mineral leasing acts (for leaseable minerals), FLPMA (43 USC 1701 et seq.), Minerals Act of 1947 (for salable minerals), implementing regulations (43 CFR 3700 and 3800), the Energy Policy Act, and the National Energy Policy (both of these as they relate to geothermal energy). Development of mineral resources from public lands managed by the BLM is directed by Congress through various enabling laws under three general categories: locatable minerals (General Mining Law of 1872, as amended), leasable minerals (subject to the various Mineral Leasing Acts), and salable minerals (subject to mineral materials disposed of under the Materials Act of 1947, as amended).

The general goals for mineral resources under the CDCA Plan's Geology, Energy, and Mineral Resources Element are to:

- Assure the availability of known mineral resource lands for exploration and development within the multiple-use management framework.

- Encourage the development of mineral resources in a manner which satisfies national and local needs and provides for economically and environmentally sound exploration, extraction, and reclamation processes.

- Develop a mineral resource inventory; geology, energy, and minerals resources database; and professional, technical, and managerial staff knowledgeable in mineral exploration and development.

2.3.14.1 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

2.3.14.1.1 Locatable Minerals

- Consolidate, through land tenure adjustments, surface and subsurface (minerals) estates under single ownerships when possible, thereby improving manageability of the federal lands involved. Consolidate split-estate pursuant to Sections 205 and 206 of FLPMA.

- Require a notice when mechanical equipment is used for exploration or processing, and cumulative disturbance is less than 5 acres.

- Require mining plans of operations where disturbance is greater than 5 acres and/or where bulk sampling would remove 1,000 tons or more.

- Require an investigation and a report to determine the validity of the mining claim prior to approval of a mining plan of operations in withdrawn areas.

- Require a mining plan of operations in any special designation in accordance with existing 43 CFR 3809 regulations.

- Require mining plans of operation in areas designated as closed to OHV recreation and in lands or waters known to contain federally listed threatened or endangered species or proposed or designated critical habitat.

- Require a notice for review or a plan of operations for approval for any surface disturbance associated with casual use activity in designated critical habitat causing more than negligible disturbance.

All mining disturbances created after the plan of operations would be reclaimed to meet the surrounding natural environment. Mining activities would be in compliance with all State of California reclamation requirements, particularly the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.

Wilderness is withdrawn from all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws.

2.3.14.1.2 Leasable Minerals

In highly sensitive areas, where special stipulations are not sufficient to protect surface resource values, including recreation, special status species, and special designations, stipulations for no surface occupancy for leasable mineral development may be attached to the lease.

- Manage consistent with the Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Range-wide Management Strategy.

2.3.14.1.3 Salable Minerals

- Issue mineral material sales or free use permits on a case by case basis in the approximate one-mile-wide planning zone around the ISD SRMA (which is a Limited Use Area) but consistent with applicable land use plans.

2.3.14.2 Management Actions by Alternative

Table 2-15 lists the management prescriptions that vary by alternative as they affect access to and development of mineral resources within the Planning Area.

TABLE 2-15
POTENTIAL MINERAL RESOURCE DECISIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Mineral Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Locatable								
Propose withdrawal of the ACEC(s) and critical habitat from mineral entry.			X	X	X	X		
Maintain ACEC(s) as open to mineral entry under the Mining Law, subject to Section 7 and Section 106 consultations.	X	X					X	X
Propose withdrawal of ISD SRMA from mineral entry.			X					
Maintain the ISD SRMA, excluding wilderness, as open to mineral entry under the Mining Law, subject to Section 7 and Section 106 consultations.	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Leasable								
Classify the flat-tailed horned lizard management area as available for geothermal leasing, but with a no surface occupancy stipulation.								X
Classify the one-mile-wide planning zone surrounding the SRMA (excluding flat-tailed horned lizard management area) as available for geothermal minerals leasing.								X
Open the entire Planning Area, with the exclusion of wilderness, to geothermal minerals leasing, but with a no surface occupancy stipulation.				X				
Open the entire Planning Area, with the exclusion of wilderness, to geothermal minerals leasing and surface occupancy.	X	X					X	
Allow geothermal mineral leasing on nominated lands under 43 CFR 3203.10.					X	X		

TABLE 2-15
POTENTIAL MINERAL RESOURCE DECISIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Mineral Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Leasable (cont.)								
Prohibit geothermal minerals leasing within the entire Planning Area.			X					
Exclude donated lands from geothermal minerals leasing.								X
Exclude ISD SRMA from geothermal minerals leasing.								X
Prohibit surface occupancy within critical habitat, ACEC(s), other special area designations, and camping and staging areas.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Prohibit surface occupancy within the ISD SRMA.			X					
Salable								
Prohibit mineral sales or free use permits within the ISD SRMA.			X					X

2.3.14.3 Locatable Minerals

Minerals subject to location under the General Mining Law of 1872 (30 USC 22, et seq.; as amended) include metallic minerals such as gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, and uranium; non-metallic minerals such as asbestos, barite, gypsum, and mica; and uncommon varieties of stone (43 CFR 3800). The General Mining Law of 1872 allows citizens and those declaring an intent to become citizens of the United States the right to enter upon public lands and reserve interests for the purposes of exploration and development of minerals subject to the mining law. Appropriation of a mineral deposit is made by location of a mining claim. No rights under the mining laws can be exercised by a claimant until a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit has been made within the boundaries of the mining claim.

Exploration and development must be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies, and in conformance with the approved land-use plan. Restrictions and stipulations may be applied to a proposed activity based on review and analysis by the authorized officer.

All activity is managed under the authority of the regulations at 43 CFR 3809 (public lands and wilderness) and 43 CFR 3802 (WSAs). Authorization is based on the level of disturbance and whether the activity is conducted in a special designation area. Casual use activities—such as panning for gold, prospecting, and monumentation of mining claims—are authorized by the regulations where disturbance will be nominal. No approval is required from the authorized officer of the BLM. Where exploration activities would cause more than nominal disturbance and surface disturbance is five acres or less, a notice is required to be reviewed by the authorized officer of the BLM to assure that unnecessary or undue degradation would not occur to public lands or resources. A plan of operations is required for surface disturbance greater than 5 acres in a special

area or for mining activity greater than casual use. A plan of operations must be approved by the authorized officer of the BLM and may be subject to stipulations to assure conformance with the land-use plan.

BLM manages to protect sensitive resources by defining protective prescriptions in land-use planning that are to be applied in any approval of activities. Where mineral development activity would adversely affect sensitive resource values, the BLM may petition (to the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management) for withdrawal an area from the operation of the mining laws. Withdrawals greater than 5,000 acres must have congressional review and approval.

The BLM must make public land and resources available for prospecting and location of valuable (locatable) mineral deposits to meet local, regional, and national needs for metals and industrial minerals, and protect sensitive resource values.

2.3.14.3.1 Goals and Objectives

- Provide opportunities for exploration, location, and development of mining claims and sites while preventing unnecessary or undue degradation of public lands and resources.

2.3.14.3.2 Management Actions by Alternatives

- Locatable minerals materials would be available as described in Table 2-15 above, which provides management actions that vary by alternative.

2.3.14.4 Leasable Minerals

Leasable minerals include fluid energy mineral deposits such as oil, gas, coal bed methane, carbon dioxide (CO_2), and geothermal resources, as well as solid energy and industrial minerals such as coal, sodium, and potash. Although not a leasable mineral, helium is included in this category, because it is typically associated with CO_2 exploration and development (43 CFR 3100 and 43 CFR 3200).

Laws and regulations applicable to federal leasing in the Planning Area include:

- Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended and supplemented
- Acquired Lands Mineral Leasing Act of 1947
- Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970
- Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987
- 43 CFR 3100 (Oil and Gas Leasing)

- 43 CFR 3200 (Geothermal Resources Leasing)
- BLM Manual Series 3100—*Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing* (and handbooks)

The BLM defines geothermal resources as renewable energy fluid minerals that can be developed after obtaining a lease from BLM. Regulations applicable to geothermal leasing of federal minerals in the Planning Area include but are not limited to:

- Geothermal Steam Act of 1970
- 43 CFR 3200

The lease is a right to access and develop mineral resources contained within the boundaries of the leased area in compliance with the lease terms and in conformance with appropriate local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Where information is necessary to classify lands as valuable to the public for minerals subject to the leasing laws, prospecting permits may be authorized before leases would be approved. Where mineral deposits subject to leasing are known to be valuable, BLM may offer to lease through competition. Competitive leasing is required for all oil and gas. Leases are typically termed for 20 years and are extended as long as in producing status. A payment of an annual rental and or a royalty for minerals produced is made to the U.S. by the lessee.

In some situations where sensitive resource values occur, a lease may be issued with a no surface occupancy (NSO) requirement. This requirement must assure that the mineral deposit on the lease could be developed by means of off-site development.

A determination that lands are available for leasing represents a commitment to allow surface use under standard terms and conditions, unless stipulations constraining development are attached to leases. Standard lease stipulations for geothermal leasing are found in Appendix G. When applying leasing restrictions, the least restrictive constraint to meet the resource protection objective would be used.

For reserved mineral interests on private land, leasing of federal mineral estate on lands where the surface is not held by the federal government would be done in accordance with federal law, regulations, and policy guidance. The surface owner would be notified prior to lease and given the opportunity to comment.

2.3.14.4.1 Goals and Objectives

- Provide opportunities for mineral leasing while preventing unnecessary or undue degradation of public lands.

2.3.14.4.2 Management Actions by Alternative

Leasable minerals would be available as described in Table 2-15 above. Table 2-16 provides the acreages of lands available for potential geothermal minerals leasing by alternatives. Maps 2-7 through 2-11 show land available for geothermal minerals leasing by alternative. Wilderness is not available for leasing and is not included in acres or alternatives. See Appendix H for a comparison by alternative of lands available for geothermal, solar, and wind energy development.

TABLE 2-16
LAND AVAILABLE FOR GEOTHERMAL MINERALS LEASING BY ALTERNATIVE (ACRES)

	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Available	188,832	188,832	0	0	11,939	11,939	188,832	35,115
Not available	0	0	188,832	0	176,894	176,894	0	139,691
Available, but with an NSO stipulation	0	0	0	188,832	0	0	0	14,025
Total	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832

Note: Inconsistencies in acres may be due to GIS data and rounding.

2.3.14.5 Salable Minerals

Salable minerals include construction materials such as sand, gravel, cinders, decorative rock, and building stone as described in (43 CFR 3600). Laws and regulations applicable to salable minerals on public lands in the Planning Area include:

- Acquired Lands Mineral Leasing Act of 1947
- Mineral Materials Act of 1947 as amended
- FLPMA; and 43 CFR Part 3600
- Surface Resources Act of 1955
- BLM Handbook H3042-1—*Solid Minerals Reclamation Handbook*
- BLM Manual and Handbook 3600

Disposal of mineral materials from BLM-administered lands requires either a sales contract or a free use permit from the appropriate BLM office. Disposal of mineral materials is authorized in accordance with appropriate laws, regulations, and policies in conformance with the approved land-use plan and if disposal is determined to be in the public interest. Use of public lands and resources for salable mineral development

cannot be allowed, if not in the public interest and if such action would result in unnecessary or undue degradation to public lands or resources.

Public lands would be available for disposal of salable mineral materials at the discretion of the authorized officer.

2.3.14.5.1 Goals and Objectives

- Prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of public lands.
- Respond appropriately to increasing demand for mineral materials in the Planning Area.
- Provide mineral materials on a case-by-case basis for infrastructure development.

2.3.14.5.2 Management Actions by Alternative

- Salable minerals materials would be available as described in Table 2-15, which provides management actions that vary by alternative.

2.3.15 Recreation Resource Management

There are several regulations, laws, policies, and guidelines that authorize and direct BLM recreation management activities. FLPMA originally mandated that the BLM was to manage outdoor recreation resources on public lands. Section 202(c)(9) of FLPMA provides to the extent consistent with law governing the administration of the public lands, BLM is to coordinate the land use inventory, planning, and management activities of or for the public lands with the land use planning and management programs of other federal, state, tribal, and local governments, including statewide outdoor recreation plans. The BLM is directed, to the extent practicable, assure that consideration is given to state, local and tribal plans germane to the development of public land use plans, and resolve, again to the extent practicable, inconsistencies between the federal and non-federal plans. Public land use plans are to be consistent with state and local plans to the maximum extent the Secretary of the Interior finds consistent with federal law and the purposes of FLPMA. FLPMA's implementing regulations enable the BLM to collect Special Recreation Permit (SRP) fees.

Recreation within the Planning Area is also managed under the *National Management Strategy for Motorized OHV Use on Public Lands* (BLM 2001a) and under the Recreation Element of the CDCA Plan and is consistent with the foals of the CDCA Plan Recreation Element.

The CDCA Plan provides overall management direction for all public lands in the CDCA. The CDCA Plan's Recreation Element lists the following management goals:

- Provide for a wide range of quality recreation opportunities and experiences emphasizing dispersed undeveloped use.
- Provide minimum use recreation facilities. These facilities should emphasize resource protection and visitor safety.
- Manage recreation use to minimize user conflicts, provide a safe recreation environment, and protect desert resources.
- Emphasize the use of public information and education techniques to increase public awareness, enjoyment, and sensitivity to desert resources.
- Adjust management approach to accommodate changing visitor use patterns and preferences.
- Encourage the use and enjoyment of desert recreation opportunities by special populations, and provide facilities to meet the needs of these groups.

2.3.15.1 Goals and Objectives

The majority of visitation to the Planning Area is associated with motorized camping and OHV recreation. However, other recreational activities such as hunting, hiking, wildflower and wildlife viewing, bird watching, photography, and commercial uses also occur to a lesser degree. As such, the majority of public lands within the Planning Area have recreation opportunities that can be appropriately managed while conserving natural, biological, and cultural resources as prescribed by the BLM's multiple-use mission and planning documents.

This recreation and visitor services blueprint (based on the BLM National Recreation and Visitor Services program) for the future also sets three primary goals for the BLM recreation program:

1. Improve access to appropriate recreation opportunities on BLM-managed lands.
2. Ensure a quality experience and enjoyment of natural, biological, and cultural resources on BLM-managed lands.
3. Provide for and receive fair value in recreation.

To meet the specific needs and changing demands of recreation visitors and changes in BLM recreation management, a BLM California-specific *Recreation and Visitor Services Strategy* was completed in 2008 (BLM 2008c). The strategy outlined a framework with specific goals, objectives, and actions to be implemented. The three primary goals of the document were designed to increase public land stewardship through consistent and coordinated management of the BLM California recreation program in order to achieve

the best possible balance of recreational uses and land health standards statewide. The three primary goals are to:

1. Set a framework for achieving sustainable experiences and quality of life outcomes for individuals, communities, and the environment.

2. Sustain diversity, distinctive character, and capacity of BLM recreation settings.

3. Increase the economic stability and sustainability of the BLM California recreation program.

The seven main objectives for BLM recreation management in California are to:

1. Manage for recreation experiences and quality of life.

2. Encourage sustainable travel/tourism collaborations.

3. Fair value and return through fees and commercial services.

4. Establish a comprehensive approach to travel management.

5. Public health and safety and improve accessibility.

6. Enhance and expand visitor services.

7. Encourage and sustain collaborative partnerships.

2.3.15.2 General Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Develop or retrofit facilities to accommodate visitation and meet agency requirements.

- Design all new facilities to meet the social needs of the visitors and the management needs of the BLM.

- Provide a minimum number of recreational facilities. Those facilities should emphasize resource protection and visitor safety.

- Determine if existing facilities meet accessibility standards, management objectives, and desired future conditions. Existing facilities deemed critical would be maintained and/or modified to be accessible, to the extent possible, and safe for visitor use. Facilities not meeting management objectives and accessibility standards would be considered for removal.

- Collect recreation fees.

- Collect SRP fees for commercial and non-commercial activities under the authority of the FLREA (PL 108-447, Section 804) and other applicable regulations and BLM policy.

- Conduct a visitor survey to provide public input on safety, natural, biological, and cultural resources concerns, and management of the Planning Area. Implement a visitor and OHV recreation survey.

- Work cooperatively with the OHV community, the environmental community, and other local, state, and federal agencies to develop and implement interpretive and public relations programs about issues and resources related to the Planning Area.

- Develop and maintain educational programs which may include on-the-ground improvements such as signs and interpretative kiosks, partnerships, and educational materials throughout the Planning Area as funding allows.

- Provide quality informational and interpretive materials and programs to enhance the visitor's knowledge of the Planning Area's flora, fauna, historic, recreational, and other significant resources and opportunities. Emphasize the use of public information and education techniques to increase public awareness, enjoyment, and sensitivity to desert resources.

- Consider utilization of concessionaire(s) to manage certain activities and uses in the Planning Area within the framework of the ISD RAMP.

- Develop ways of using concessions to help maintain or operate recreation areas.

- Protect at-risk cultural and historical resources from recreational damage as needed throughout the Planning Area. Work together with new and existing groups to foster partnerships that accomplish BLM goals and objectives.

- Prohibit collection of wood for home heating purposes.

- Prohibit burning wood with non-combustible items (pallets).

- Maintain and/or develop volunteer campground host program in appropriate areas.

- Prohibit vending in all areas closed to OHV recreation and in limited use areas.

- Create an environment to promote the health and safety of visitors, employees, and nearby residents by working with local, state, and federal agencies and interest groups.

- Manage recreational use to minimize user conflicts, provide a safe recreation environment, and protect desert resources.

- Engage communities, including key enthusiasts, in the resolution of health and safety issues/other conflicts at BLM recreational sites or areas.

- Improve capacity to inform visitors about safety concerns (e.g., facilities, fire), environmental conditions, and emergency situations, both on-site and by using web-based and other technologies.

- Work with law enforcement officers and public affairs staff when possible to publicize vandalism and convictions.

- Maintain involvement in community-based planning to address mutual needs including communities (all local governments), service-providing businesses, and the BLM.

- Engage chamber of commerce/tourism groups, outdoor businesses, heritage organizations, outfitters, other private recreation providers, and organized groups for ideas and ways to disseminate information regarding suitable visitor destinations on public lands, maps, and user ethics.

- Develop and maintain partnerships that fulfill local needs while balancing recreational demands in administering public lands.

- Continue and enhance partnerships with other federal and state agencies, such as the Department of Defense (DOD), California State Parks, and CDFG.

- Adjust management approach to accommodate changing visitor use patterns and preferences.

- Continue working with the business community, organized recreation groups, outfitters, communities, and interested individuals to instill a sense of pride and caring for public lands.

- Expand visitor education regarding a “pack it in, pack it out” policy. Continue to educate the public regarding *Leave No Trace* or *Tread Lightly!* ethics.

- Use alternative funding sources (such as Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) to partner with local groups to further transportation planning.

- Allow camping and OHV recreation within the Dunebuggy Flats Campground.

2.3.15.3 Management Actions by Alternatives

Table 2-17 presents the management actions for recreation management that vary by alternative. See Appendix H for a comparison by alternative and issue of recreation management actions.

TABLE 2-17
RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Allow camping and OHV recreation within some of the microphyll woodlands south of SR-78 and north of I-8.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Prohibit camping within the microphyll woodlands south of Wash 33 and north of Wash 70. OHV recreation would continue to be allowed in this area.								X

2.3.15.4 Recreation Management Areas

The BLM identifies SRMAs where the resources of the public lands attract visitors from one of the three following recreation markets:

Public lands with a demonstrated *community* recreation–tourism market would be managed as a Community SRMA. A Community SRMA is managed in collaboration with the local community to primarily benefit the local residents.

Public lands with a demonstrated *destination* recreation–tourism market would be managed as a Destination SRMA. A Destination SRMA is managed as a regional or national destination through collaborative partnerships.

Public lands with a demonstrated *undeveloped* recreation–tourism market would be managed as an Undeveloped SRMA. An Undeveloped SRMA is managed to maintain dispersed and undeveloped recreation opportunities.

The ISD will be managed as a Destination SRMA. The ISD SRMA encompasses 164,209 acres (including the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness) of BLM-administered lands (Map 2-12). This planning effort will also address impacts to the area one mile beyond and parallel to the ISD SRMA boundary, encompassing 50,722 acres of BLM-administered lands (see Map 2-12). Currently, the approximate one-mile planning zone around the ISD SRMA is managed under WECO within the west portion and NECO within the east portion.

2.3.15.4.1 Imperial Sand Dunes SRMA

The ISD SRMA currently includes the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness and the Plank Road ACEC special designations. The ISD SRMA boundaries are the U.S.–Mexico

border to the south, the Coachella Canal to the west (for the most part), the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) to the east (along with portions of Ogilby Road and the All-American Canal), and the Mammoth Wash area to the north where the dunes terminate (see Map 2-12).

The ISD SRMA would be managed as a nationally unique resource for dune-based recreation opportunities. The BLM would continue to provide recreation opportunities for the public throughout the ISD SRMA by following the goals and objectives in the 2008 BLM California Recreation and Visitor Services Strategy.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Provide a variety of sustainable OHV and other recreational activities.
- Develop, continue, and/or improve recreation monitoring to provide accurate and consistent data in order to make sound management decisions.
- Provide a quality recreational experience for OHV enthusiasts in the ISD SRMA.
- Manage the ISD SRMA as a regional or national destination through collaborative partnerships to promote the continued use of the lands for these activities.
- Manage the ISD SRMA as a nationally unique resource for dune-based recreation opportunities.
- Assure the conservation of recreation diversity to provide a spectrum of opportunities to meet the diverse tastes and preferences of the public.
- Provide for a wide range of quality recreation opportunities and experiences emphasizing facility-based and dispersed undeveloped use.
- Encourage the use and enjoyment of desert recreation opportunities by special populations, and provide facilities to meet the needs of those groups.
- Collaborate with communities and constituencies to inventory and administer setting character to maintain a diversity of settings across the entire spectrum of recreation experiences, which include motorized recreation uses such as motorcycling, four-wheeling, OHVs, and driving for pleasure; non-motorized recreation experiences such as hiking, horseback riding, and backpacking; and heritage tourism options that maintain the integrity of cultural, paleontological, and natural history and historical locations while interpreting the stories of these important places.
- Implement and monitor plan objectives to ensure that benefits, experiences, maintenance of recreation setting character, and land health standards are met.

- Continue to partner and collaborate with gateway communities and other partners to increase support, and strengthen economies for BLM recreational destinations.

- Identify opportunities for companies and community businesses to sponsor projects that achieve management objectives, maintain recreational character, and meet land health standards.

- Identify sustainable tourism opportunities and work with local communities, partners, historic interest groups, and the tourism community to sustain and promote education about, and enjoyment, and protection of those opportunities.

- Expand the adoption of recreation areas by partners and volunteers, by including them in the planning process as well as in implementing actions and assisting with ongoing maintenance.

- Continue to work closely with other agencies, local communities, and groups to support and promote the Watchable Wildlife program.

Primary Market Strategy

The primary market strategy for the potential ISD SRMA would be to target demonstrated destination recreation–tourism market demand for specific activity, experience, and benefit opportunities.

Partnerships and Coordination

The BLM would coordinate with local and gateway communities, Native American tribes and groups, California SHPO, Imperial County, CDFG, USFWS, U.S. Border Patrol (USBP), California State Parks, California State Lands Commission, local public health and safety organizations, other law enforcement entities, and various non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Environmental Education Needs

The BLM supports the *Tread Lightly!* and *Leave No Trace* national programs and promotes responsible OHV recreation, hunting ethics, and natural, biological, and cultural resource ethics. BLM would provide information about recreation, natural, cultural, and historical resources, and other points of interest.

2.3.15.4.2 Recreation Management Zones

Within each SRMA, BLM also allocates RMZs. An RMZ represents public lands with a distinctive recreation niche (activities, experiences, and benefits) within each SRMA. The BLM would focus management, funding, and planning within the SRMA and its RMZs to work towards stated Recreation Management Goals and Objectives.

The allocation of the SRMA and RMZs provides the Planning Area with an activity-level planning framework for recreation management. This Proposed RAMP provides additional opportunities for public involvement and agency collaboration to further ensure that proposed actions are compatible with the BLM's multiple-use mission.

Recreation Management Zones are presented in Table 2-18 below. Maps 2-13 through 2-18 show RMZs by alternative. RMZs within the ISD SRMA had not previously been allocated; therefore Alternatives 1 and 2 do not have RMZ allocations in Table 2-18 below.

TABLE 2-18
RECREATION MANAGEMENT ZONES BY ALTERNATIVE (ACRES)

Recreation Management Zone (RMZ)	Alternatives							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Open RMZ	n/a	n/a	74,676	105,843	103,839	108,914	125,710	127,416
Resource Protection RMZ	n/a	n/a	61,680	29,122	32,516	27,441	10,645	9,046
Limited RMZ	n/a	n/a	52,477	53,868	52,477	52,477	52,477	52,370
North Algodones Dunes Wilderness RMZ	n/a	n/a	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098
Total	n/a	n/a	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930

Note: Inconsistencies in acres may be due to GIS data and rounding.

Open RMZ

Goals and Objectives

Open RMZ would be managed for OHV and other motorized recreational opportunities while conserving natural, biological, and cultural resources.

Recreation Niche: The Open RMZ consists of two types of opportunities, camping and expansive sand dune OHV recreation. The camping areas are destination points off several roads and highways, including Interstate 8 (I-8), Ogilby Road (S34), and SR-78, that accommodate large, motorized camping units such as recreational vehicles (RVs), toy haulers, semi truck/trailer combinations, fifth wheel trailers, and others. The OHV recreation area encompasses the large and small sand dunes where visitors operate their OHV for recreation.

Primary Activities: Camping and OHV recreation.

Experiences: OHV recreation, risk and challenge, camping (socializing with friends and family), watching OHV activity, commercial vending, reading, walking, and photography.

Interactions between visitors may be high. Developed entry and access roads, intensified motorized recreation.

Benefits:

Personal: Increased opportunities for visitors to appreciate open spaces through motorized and non-motorized recreation. Improves quality of life for visitors through health and fitness, stress reduction, and mental well-being. Promotes self-reliance and self-confidence through improved skills and knowledge. Enhanced sense of freedom, personal adventure, and appreciation of nature.

Household & Community: Increased natural and historical appreciation from regional tourism. Increased opportunity for positive social interactions—including family bonding, OHV community, and stewardship of the public lands.

Economic: Increased local and regional tourism. Increased local and regional tax revenue and employment opportunities.

Environment: Reduced impacts to more sensitive natural, biological, and cultural resources by managing OHV recreation into areas identified by BLM.

Resource Protection RMZ

Goals and Objectives

The Resource Protection RMZ would be managed for its natural qualities to provide opportunities for expansive non-motorized recreational activities.

Recreation Niche: The Resource Protection RMZ would accommodate non-motorized recreation. Recreation may occur in the form of hiking, photography, and wildlife viewing. This RMZ provides the opportunity for environmental education through non-motorized exploration and observation of native plant and animal species.

Primary Activities: Hiking, wildlife viewing, photography.

Experiences: Hiking, wildlife viewing, and environmental education opportunities. Interactions between visitors may be low. No entry and access roads.

Benefits:

Personal: Increased opportunities for visitors to appreciate open spaces through non-motorized recreation. Improves quality of life for visitors through health and fitness, stress reduction, and mental well-being. Promotes self-reliance, and self-confidence through improved skills and knowledge. Enhanced sense of freedom, personal adventure, and appreciation of nature.

Household & Community: Increased natural and historical appreciation. Increased opportunity for positive social interactions, including family bonding and stewardship of the public lands.

Economic: Increased regional tourism revenues.

Environment: Reduced impacts to sensitive natural, biological, and cultural resources by reducing OHV recreation areas.

Limited RMZ

Goals and Objectives

The Limited RMZ would be managed for its limited motorized recreational opportunities and for natural qualities. There are three potential types of limited opportunities in the RMZ (limited OHV use, camping, and environmental education and tourism). The Limited RMZ is also managed under the NECO and WECO plans where OHV travel is permitted on designated routes.

Recreation Niche: The seasonal restriction Limited RMZ area can be accessed from I-8 to the Dunebuggy Flats camping area. The NECO and WECO Limited RMZ areas can be accessed from several points, including I-8, Ogilby Road, and SR-78. The area between the old and new Coachella canals can be accessed from I-8 and SR-78. These areas within the Limited RMZ provide the opportunity for environmental education through several interpretive kiosks in addition to offering camping and limited use OHV recreation.

Primary Activities: Camping and OHV recreation.

Experiences: Limited use OHV recreation (travel limited to designated routes of travel or areas with seasonal restrictions under specific conditions), camping, environmental education, and tourism opportunities. Interactions between users may be low. Developed entry and access roads, limited motorized recreation, and extensive sand dunes.

Benefits:

Personal: Increased opportunities for visitors to appreciate open spaces through limited motorized recreation. Improves quality of life for visitors through health and fitness, stress reduction, and mental well-being. Promotes self-reliance, and self-confidence through improved skills and knowledge. Enhanced sense of freedom, personal adventure, and appreciation of nature.

Household & Community: Increased natural and historical appreciation from regional tourism. Increased opportunity for positive social interactions, including family bonding, OHV community, and stewardship of the public lands.

Economic: Increased regional tourism.

Environment: Reduced impacts to more sensitive natural, biological, and cultural resources by managing OHV recreation into areas identified by BLM.

North Algodones Dunes Wilderness RMZ

Goals and Objectives

The North Algodones Dunes Wilderness RMZ would be managed to sustain its wilderness character and provide for non-motorized recreation opportunities.

Recreation N iche: The North Algodones Dunes Wilderness RMZ is an accessible destination point north of SR-78 that would accommodate non-motorized recreation. Recreational use may occur in the form of hiking and photography. This RMZ provides the opportunity for environmental education as well as informational kiosks, in addition to offering non-motorized recreation.

Primary Activities: Hiking, camping, photography.

Experiences: Camping, hiking, and environmental education opportunities. Interactions between users may be low. Developed entry and access roads, and scattered non-motorized recreational use.

Benefits:

Personal: Increased opportunities for visitors to appreciate open spaces through non-motorized recreation. Improves quality of life for visitors through health and fitness, stress reduction, and mental well-being. Promotes self-reliance, and self-confidence through improved skills and knowledge. Enhanced sense of freedom, personal adventure, and appreciation of nature.

Household & Community: Increased natural and historical appreciation. Increased opportunity for positive social interactions, including family bonding and stewardship of the public lands.

Economic: Increased regional tourism revenues.

Environment: Reduced impacts to sensitive natural, biological, and cultural resources within the wilderness.

2.3.16 Transportation and Public Access

Managing access to and across public lands is a vital task for BLM under the authority of 43 CFR 8342.1. OHV use is an important component of recreational use in the ISD Planning Area. To better describe and analyze all aspects of travel management, OHV use is discussed in this section rather than in the recreation section.

Among the goals of the CDCA Plan for motorized vehicle access are

1) Provide for constrained motorized vehicle access in a manner that balances the needs of all desert users, private landowners, and other public agencies.

2) Avoid adverse impacts to desert resources to the degree possible, when designating or amending areas or routes for motorized vehicle access.

The BLM designates public lands as open, limited, or closed to the use of off-road and OHVs under a variety of authorities, including but not limited to FLPMA, EOs 11644 and 11989, and the designation criteria found in 43 CFR 8342. The criteria in 43 CFR 8342.1 are also fully described in Chapter 3, section 3.16.1.1. These criteria were used to develop the alternatives listed below. This section also discusses proposed travel management designations carried over from the existing NECO and WECO plan amendments. The NECO plan decisions have been in place since 2002 and the WECO decisions since 2003. Route designations from these plans were developed to minimize impacts to federally listed and BLM sensitive species, including the desert tortoise and flat-tailed horned lizard. These decisions from the NECO and WECO plans are carried forward for all alternatives in this Proposed RAMP and Final EIS.

The following proposed decisions concerning transportation and public access for the public lands within the Planning Area are:

- Designate all BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area as open, closed, or limited to OHV use.

- Develop a travel management network of roads and trails that designates which routes are open, closed, or limited to OHVs and other motorized vehicles.

OHV Management area designations are land use plan decisions that may be protested. Routes of travel designations are land use implementation decisions that are appealable (see Chapter 1 and Dear Reader Letter).

Although the CDCA Plan does not have any formal management goals for transportation, the Motorized Vehicle Access Element states, “Based on implementation priorities, BLM will, with assistance from the public, determine which routes in [multiple use] Class L and M areas need to be closed or limited in some other way. Route approval will be based on these considerations” (BLM 1999).

2.3.16.1 OHV Management Area Designations

This Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan amendment and Final EIS proposes to designate all BLM-administered public lands within the Planning Area as open, closed, or limited to motorized use. OHV management areas by alternative are presented in Table 2-19 and Maps 2-19 through 2-26. Definitions for limited, open, and closed area designations are established in 43 CFR 8340.0-5 (f), (g), and (h), respectively and are listed below. See Appendix H for a comparison by alternative and issue of recreation management actions.

The alternatives were developed using the criteria in 43 CFR 8342.1 and are intended to minimize damage to vegetation, wildlife, and wildlife habitat and to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitat and promote their recovery. Impacts to these resources and the measures taken to minimize impacts are described in the sections pertaining to these resources. The preferred alternative designates all critical habitat for Peirson's milk-vetch as closed to OHV use. A total of 8,840 acres would be closed in addition to the areas closed through wilderness designation. Areas designated as limited to OHV use are carried over from the existing 1987 RAMP and the NECO and WECO CDCA Plan Amendments but vary by alternative based on the acres designated as closed in each alternative.

TABLE 2-19
OHV MANAGEMENT AREA DESIGNATIONS BY ALTERNATIVE (ACRES[1])

	Alternative							
Designation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Open	120,393	87,713	74,676	105,843	103,839	108,914	125,710	127,416
Closed	26,098	75,322	87,778	55,220	58,614	53,539	36,743	35,144
Limited	68,440	51,896	52,477	53,868	52,477	52,477	52,477	52,370
Total Acres	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930	214,930

[1] BLM-administered acres within the Planning Area.
Note: Inconsistencies in acres may be due to GIS data and rounding.

Open ar eas are areas where all types of vehicle use are permitted at all times, anywhere in the area subject to the operating regulations and vehicle standards set forth in 43 CFR 8341 and 8342.

Limited areas are restricted at certain times, in certain areas, and/or to certain vehicular use. These restrictions may be of any type, but can generally be accommodated within the following categories: numbers of vehicles, types and sizes of vehicles, time or season of vehicle use, permitted or licensed use only, use on existing roads and trails, use on designated roads and trails, limited to administrative use only, and other restrictions. In accordance with the CDCA Plan, as amended, stopping, parking, and vehicle camping is allowed within 300 feet of the centerline of a route, except within

sensitive areas (such as ACECs), where the limit would be 100 feet, and within the Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Management Area, where the limit would be 50 feet. This would be monitored on a continuing basis. If monitoring results show effects that exceed limits of acceptable change, the distance allowed for motorized vehicles to pull off from a designated route may be modified. This plan would continue to be consistent with the CDCA Plan, as amended (NECO and WECO).

Closed areas are areas where motorized vehicle use is prohibited. Use of OHVs in closed areas may be allowed for administrative or emergency purposes; however, such use would be made only with the approval of the authorizing officer. Congressionally designated wilderness is statutorily closed to motorized and mechanized use, except for purposes specifically provided for by law.

2.3.16.2 Routes of Travel

The routes of travel currently existing in the one-mile-wide planning zone of the Planning Area were developed through the NECO (BLM 2002a) and WECO (BLM 2003a) CDCA Plan amendments and the designation criteria found in 43 CFR 8342.1. The NECO and WECO plans were developed to protect federally listed threatened or endangered species and promote their recovery, as well as minimize impacts to other special status plant and animal species. Decisions in these plans include reducing OHV routes and areas open to camping in sensitive species habitat; improved signing; increased law enforcement; and restoration and monitoring of closed routes. These decisions from the NECO and WECO plans are carried forward for all alternatives in this Proposed RAMP and Final EIS. The efforts to minimize impacts to these resources are documented in the description of alternatives, affected environment, and environmental consequences chapters of the plan amendments and their associated environmental analysis documents. In addition, the NECO Plan includes biological parameters to minimize harassment of wildlife and disruption of habitats from OHV route designations. See NECO Chapter 2, section 2.5.2 Table 2-11. These plan amendments are included by reference.

These routes of travel (Map 2-27) are within designated limited use areas and are brought forward as valid, existing implementation decisions and are common to all alternatives. See Chapter 3 (Affected Environment) Section 3.16—Transportation and Public Access, for further discussion of the existing routes of travel and the criteria used to designate them.

Routes of travel within the OHV limited use area surrounding the ISD SRMA have been designated as open routes, except for Grays Well Road, Luis Aguilar Road, Wash Road, and Gecko Road, which are limited to street legal vehicles only. To minimize impacts to sensitive species, stopping, parking, and camping along the open routes in the Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Management Area is limited to within 50 feet on either side of the

route centerline. Routes within the ISD SRMA, excluding the wilderness, have also been designated as open, except for Grays Well Road, Luis Aguilar Road, Wash Road, and Gecko Road, which are limited to street legal vehicles only. Open routes are available to motorized vehicles. Limited routes may have additional limitations on use including vehicle size, vehicle type, and season of use. Closed routes would be closed to motorized vehicles, including OHVs, but open to biking, hiking, and equestrian use. Table 2-20 provides the total mileage of open and limited routes in the Planning Area, and Map 2-27 illustrates the locations of the various routes of travel.

TABLE 2-20
ROUTES OF TRAVEL (MILES)

Route Name	Miles
Grays Well Road	4.49
Luis Aguilar Road	0.49
Wash Road	5.69
Gecko Road	6.39
Other (unpaved)	174.31
Total Miles	191.37

2.3.16.2.1 Goals and Objectives

- Ensure that the BLM would minimize impacts to identified sensitive cultural, natural, biological, and visual resources.

- Ensure that the BLM continues to provide essential motorized access to non-federal lands, prior existing rights on BLM lands, and private in-holdings surrounded by BLM lands.

- Ensure that the BLM continues to provide adequate motorized access for the maintenance of wildlife guzzlers and for dispersed recreation activities such as hunting.

- Ensure that the BLM provides for a wide variety of recreational opportunities (e.g., hiking, OHV recreation, horseback riding, and commercial activities).

- Reduce or halt the unauthorized incursions into closed areas.

2.3.16.2.2 Management Actions for Designated Routes of Travel Common to All Alternatives

To minimize impacts to sensitive resources, reduce conflicts between users, and provide for visitor safety, the following will apply to designated routes and surrounding lands within the Planning Area:

- Maintain, and where necessary, improve Wash Road.
- Allow primary motorized vehicle travel only on designated routes. Emergency vehicles may utilize a drivable wash to access a site. Where no roads exist, vehicles could be authorized on a case-by-case basis to travel cross-country to avoid the need for road building, with appropriate environmental analysis.
- Ensure that designated routes within the Planning Area are adequately signed and mapped for public use.
- Where new roads are considered in the future, roadbeds would be no wider than needed for reliable access. Proposed new roads would be considered only after appropriate environmental analysis and would use BLM specifications and BMPs to minimize impacts to resources and reduce erosion.
- Reduce vehicle incursions or trespass on closed routes or in closed areas by restoring lands to their pre-disturbance conditions as rapidly as funding permits. Sensitive resources in immediate danger or those that have been damaged by linear disturbances would be a high priority for restoration. Typically, the restoration would be limited to that portion of the route of trespass that is in line of sight from an open route. Each route would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and the most appropriate method of restoration would be used based on geography, topography, soils, hydrology, and vegetation. The methods of restoration would include:
    - Not repairing washed-out routes
    - Using natural barriers, such as large boulders
    - Using rocks and dead and downed wood to obscure the route entryway
    - Employing mulching, chipping, and raking to disguise evidence of routes
    - Ripping up the route bed and reseeding with vegetation native to that area
    - Utilizing fences or barriers
    - Providing signage, including information to OHV users, on the need and value of resource protection
    - Converting closed motorized two-track routes into non-motorized single track routes

2.3.17 Lands and Realty Management

The lands and realty management program consists of four distinct parts: land tenure, land use authorization (including solar and wind energy), withdrawals, and utility corridors. Land tenure focuses on disposing of and acquiring lands or interests in lands. Public lands would be retained in federal ownership, unless as a result of land use

planning it is determined that disposal of a particular parcel would serve the national interest.

Land use authorization focuses on public demand requests for ROWs, permits, leases, and easements.

As used in the lands and realty program, a withdrawal removes an area of federal land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under some or all of the general land laws (including the Mining Law of 1872) for the purpose of limiting activities under those laws to maintain other public values in the area or reserving the area for a particular public purpose or program. Withdrawals are also used to transfer jurisdiction over an area of federal land from one department, bureau, or agency to another.

An energy corridor is a linear strip that has been identified through the land use planning process as being a preferred location for existing and future utility ROWs and that is suitable to accommodate one or more ROWs which are similar, identical, or compatible.

The lands and realty management program administers public lands within a framework of numerous laws and regulations. The most comprehensive of these is FLPMA which, along with implementing regulations, enables BLM to accomplish a variety of land actions, including but not limited to sales, withdrawals, acquisitions, exchanges, leases, permits, easements, and ROWs. In 1988, FLPMA was amended by the Federal Land Exchange Facilitation Act (FLEFA; 102 Stat. 1087), which established uniform rules and regulations for appraisals, procedures, and guidelines for the resolution of appraisal disputes in the exchange process.

Other applicable laws and policies include:

- Mineral Leasing Act (MLA) of 1920 (30 USC 185) as amended: BLM issues ROWs for oil and natural gas pipelines and related facilities pursuant to Section 28 of the MLA.

- Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act as amended: The act of June 14, 1926, as amended (43 USC 869 et seq.), is used primarily for providing land to fulfill the need for public services (parks, monuments, schools, community buildings, hospitals, sanitary landfills) due to urban expansion.

- Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982 (49 USC 2215): The act provides for the conveyance of BLM-administered lands to public agencies for use as airports and airways.

- Federal Highway Acts: Various federal highway acts codified in 23 USC, Sections 17 and 317 and the current Interagency Agreement also apply to lands and realty management.

- Federal Land Transaction and Facilitation Act (FLTFA [114 Stat. 613; 43 USC 2301 et seq.]) of July 25, 2000: The FLTFA amended FLPMA to allow retention by the BLM of receipts received from the sale of land or interests in land under Section 203 of FLPMA or conveyance of mineral interest under Section 209(b) of FLPMA, as long as the applicable land use plan was completed prior to July 25, 2000.

- The National Energy Policy Act of 2005 and EO 13423, dated January 24, 2007 provide direction to federal agencies to take appropriate actions to expedite the review of energy-related ROW projects, support renewable energy development on federal lands (including wind energy), and improve efficiencies in the processing of ROW applications.

The CDCA Plan does not have any formal management goals for the lands and realty program.

A summary of potential lands and realty management actions by alternative is presented in Table 2-21.

2.3.17.1 Land Tenure

2.3.17.1.1 Disposal

All land disposal actions are discretionary with emphasis on the evaluation of whether such lands are: 1) manageable, 2) needed for any particular federal purpose, or 3) better suited to serving the public. Exchanges are used for disposal to assure an optimum final land ownership pattern and provide better overall land management. Sales would be considered where more efficient. Sales are primarily competitive or modified competitive. Disposal of these lands would be made on a case-by-case basis and would be accomplished by the most appropriate disposal authority.

Public lands are to be retained in federal ownership, unless it is determined that disposal of a particular parcel will serve the national interest (FLPMA section 102(a)(1)).

There are two distinct disposal methods outlined in FLPMA, sale and exchange.

Land disposal by public sale is addressed in Section 203 of FLPMA. This section contains three criteria to apply in identifying public lands suitable for disposal by public sale. The criteria are that: a) the tract of public land is difficult and uneconomical to manage as part of the public lands and is not suitable for management by another federal department or agency, b) the land is no longer required for a specific purpose, or c) disposal would serve important public objectives.

TABLE 2-21
LANDS AND REALTY ACTIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Lands Actions	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Land Tenure								
Disposal (acres)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acquisitions (acres)	Currently pending land acquisitions equal 6,603 acres under all alternatives.							
Acquisitions	Lands and interests in lands (including easements) would be acquired from willing sellers on a case-by-case basis. Land exchange proposals may also be considered on a case-by-case basis. Emphasis would be on protecting sensitive biological and archaeological resources; facilitating public recreation programs; and consolidating the wilderness.							
Land Use Authorizations								
Leases, Permits, and Easements	Considered and authorized on a case-by-case basis to meet public demand consistent with exclusion and avoidance areas[1] identified by alternative.							
Allow apiary permits on a case-by-case basis within strategically located sites to limit interaction with the public.	X			X	X	X	X	X
Prohibit apiary permits in the Planning Area.		X	X					
ROWs	Considered and authorized on a case-by-case basis to meet public demand consistent with exclusion and avoidance areas identified by alternative.							
Communication Sites (number)	3				Considered and authorized on a case-by-case basis to meet public demand consistent with exclusion and avoidance areas identified by alternative.			
Renewable (solar and wind) Energy[1]	Considered and authorized on a case-by-case basis to meet public demand consistent with exclusion and avoidance areas identified by alternative.							
The North Algodones Dunes Wilderness is withdrawn from all forms of land entry.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

TABLE 2-21
LANDS AND REALTY ACTIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Lands Actions	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Land Use Authorizations (cont.)								
ACEC(s) would be exclusion areas for solar energy development.[2]			X					X
ACECs would be exclusion areas for wind energy development.			X					X
ACECs would be avoidance areas for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
ACECs would be avoidance areas for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
ACECs would be available for solar energy development.							X	
ACECs would be available for wind energy development.							X	
ACECs would be avoidance areas for all land use authorizations other than for solar and wind development.				X	X	X		
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be an exclusion area for solar energy development.			X					X
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					X

TABLE 2-21
LANDS AND REALTY ACTIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Lands Actions	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Land Use Authorizations (cont.)								
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be avoidance area for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be available for solar energy development.							X	
Flat-tailed horned lizard management area would be available for wind energy development.							X	
PMV critical habitat would be an exclusion area solar energy development.			X					X
PMV critical habitat would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					X
PMV critical habitat would be an exclusion area for all other types of land use authorization.			X					X

TABLE 2-21
LANDS AND REALTY ACTIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Lands Actions	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Land Use Authorizations (cont.)								
PMV critical habitat would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
PMV critical habitat would be an avoidance area for wind development.		X		X	X	X		
PMV critical habitat would be an avoidance area for all other types of land use authorization.		X		X	X	X		
PMV critical habitat would be available area for solar development.							X	
PMV critical habitat would be available area for wind development.							X	
PMV critical habitat would be available for all other types of land use authorization.							X	
MUC I (intensive) lands would be an exclusion area for solar energy development.			X					
MUC I (intensive) lands would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					

TABLE 2-21
LANDS AND REALTY ACTIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Lands Actions	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Land Use Authorizations (cont.)								
MUC I (intensive) lands would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
MUC I (intensive) lands would be an avoidance area for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
MUC L (limited) lands would be an exclusion area for solar energy development.			X					
MUC L (limited) lands would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					
MUC L (limited) lands would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
MUC L (limited) lands would be an avoidance area for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Donated lands would be an exclusion area for solar energy development.			X					X
Donated lands would be an exclusion area for wind energy development.			X					X

TABLE 2-21
LANDS AND REALTY ACTIONS BY ALTERNATIVE

Lands Actions	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Land Use Authorizations (cont.)								
Donated lands would be an avoidance area for solar energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Donated lands would be an avoidance area for wind energy development.		X		X	X	X		
Donated lands would be available for solar energy development.							X	
Donated lands would be available for wind energy development.							X	
Entire Planning Area would be available for solar energy development (with exception of wilderness)	X	X					X	
Entire Planning Area would be available for wind energy development (with exception of wilderness)	X	X					X	
Withdrawals (acres)								
Existing withdrawal—North Algodones Dunes Wilderness	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098	26,098
Utility corridors (number)[3]	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

[1] Geothermal development is regulated by the land use decisions presented under leasables in the Mineral Resources section.
[2] Avoidance area is defined as an area only available for discretionary land-use authorizations when there are no other reasonable alternatives for the authorization. Exclusion area is defined as an area that is not available for discretionary land use authorizations.
[3] The contingency corridor travels along the eastern boundary of the Planning Area adjacent to the UPRR tracks.

The criteria for determining which public lands or interests therein are available for disposal by exchange are covered in Section 206 of FLPMA. These criteria require BLM to consider the public interest by giving full consideration to better federal land management and the needs of state and local people. These include the need of lands for the economy, community expansion, recreation areas, food fiber, minerals, and fish and wildlife. The criteria also require that the public objectives to be served must be greater on the lands to be acquired than on the lands to be conveyed.

The BLM may also dispose of lands under the following four authorities:

Desert Land Entry Act of 1877. No lands have been identified as meeting the criteria for entry under this authority; therefore, none are available for disposal under this authority.

Indian Allotment Act of 1887. No lands have been identified as meeting the criteria for entry under this authority; therefore, none are available for disposal under this authority.

The 1954 Revision of the Act of June 14, 1926 (R&PP) Act. This authorizes the lease and/or conveyance of BLM-administered lands for recreational or public purposes to state and local governments and to qualified nonprofit organizations under specified conditions at less than the fair market value.

The Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982. This act provides for the conveyance of BLM-administered lands to public agencies for use as airport and airways.

In general, under all land ownership adjustments, BLM would protect valid existing rights and pre-existing authorizations including but not limited to authorized permits, leases, and ROWs.

Land Available for Disposal by Alternative

No lands would be available for disposal within the Planning Area under all Alternatives.

2.3.17.1.2 Acquisition

Purchase and donations of lands are a key mechanism for land acquisition. Lands or interest in lands (including easements) may be acquired by BLM through purchase, exchange, or donation. Section 205 of FLPMA authorizes the Secretary of the Interior (delegated to BLM) to acquire non-federal lands or interests in lands pursuant to FLPMA by purchase, exchange, or donation.

Currently, the BLM is actively acquiring flat-tailed horned lizard habitat as mitigation for impacts to lost habitat resulting from several projects, including the Arizona State Highway project, Drop 2 Water Reservoir, and the All-American Canal lining.

Compensation monies are being used to make the purchases of lands from willing sellers. Sections of land, or portions thereof, which are in various stages of the acquisition process, lie within the Planning Area.

Goals and Objectives

Lands or interest in lands (including easements) to be acquired must either:

- Facilitate access to public lands and resources
- Maintain or enhance public uses and values
- Facilitate implementation of this Proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan amendment and Final EIS
- Provide for a more manageable land ownership pattern
- Include significant natural or cultural resource values

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Manage all acquired lands in accordance with the approved land use and planning decisions for surrounding or adjacent BLM-administered lands.
- Consolidate split-estate pursuant to Sections 205 and 206 of FLPMA.

Any lands acquired by the BLM would include both the surface and subsurface (minerals) estate when possible and would be managed in accordance with the approved land use decisions for the surrounding area.

2.3.17.2 Land Use Authorizations

2.3.17.2.1 Leases/Permits/Easements

The BLM would strive to increase and diversify our nation's sources of both traditional and alternative energy resources, improve our energy transportation network, and ensure sound environmental management in accordance with the President's National Energy Policy. Section 302 of FLPMA gives the Secretary of the Interior broad authority to manage public lands "through easements, permits, leases, licenses, published rules, or other instruments."

Leases, permits, or easements would be considered and issued under applicable laws and regulations pursuant to regulations found at 43 CFR 2900. Issuance of leases, permits, or easements is a discretionary action. These authorizations may include but are not limited to the following:

- Airport leases
- R&PP Act leases
- Leases, permits, or easements (e.g., film permits, apiary permits) considered or issued under 43 CFR 2920

Public land is subject to application for community expansion needs under a wide variety of public land laws. Community expansion needs would continue to be handled on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the appropriate authority. BLM would utilize federal lands for community expansion needs such as airports, parks, hospitals, and community centers pursuant to applicable laws and regulations.

An easement is defined as the right to use another landowner's real estate for a specific purpose. The most common type of easement is the right to travel over another landowner's land, known as a ROW. In addition to ROWs, the BLM may commonly grant easements for the placement of utility poles, utility trenches, water lines, or sewer lines. The owner of property that is subject to an easement is said to be "burdened" with the easement, because the allowed use may not be interfered with.

Goals and Objectives

- Manage recreational and commercial activities within the Planning Area to accommodate visitor needs, improve visitor experience, and—where consistent with management goals—allow economic benefits for local and regional communities.
- Maintain public access to BLM-administered lands through easements when needed.
- Be responsive to public demand for leases, permits, and easements on a case-by-case basis, consistent with management prescriptions in Table 2-21.

Land would not be available for leasing for residential purposes.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Consider leases, permits, and easements on a case-by-case basis to meet public demand consistent with exclusion and avoidance areas identified by alternative.

2.3.17.2.2 Right-of-way Permits

Under the authorities of FLPMA (1976) and the MLA of 1920, BLM grants ROW permits to qualified individuals, businesses, and government entities for use of public lands.

Title V of FLPMA, as amended, states that BLM is authorized to grant, issue, or renew ROW permits over, upon, under, or through lands for various uses. The uses that would be authorized by ROW permits issued pursuant to FLPMA would include access roads,

power lines, telephone lines, fiber-optic systems, communications facilities, and water and sewer pipelines.

The BLM may also allow the use of the public lands or interests in lands through issuance of ROW permits pursuant to MLA. Examples of uses that would be authorized by ROW grants issued pursuant to the MLA would include crude oil pipelines and oil and gas pipelines.

Goals and Objectives

- Be responsive to public demand for ROWs on a case-by-case basis, consistent with management prescriptions in Table 2-21.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Locate new major ROWs in designated corridors (reference Section 2.3.17.4—Utility Corridors, below, for the definition of the designated corridors), unless an evaluation of the project shows that locating outside of a designated corridor is the only practicable alternative.

2.3.17.2.3 Communication Sites

Public lands may be designated for use as communications sites. BLM communications sites accommodate the wireless systems referred to in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 as well as many other uses, including radio broadcast facilities, commercial mobile radios, private mobile radios, and microwaves on designated communications sites. Communication sites are issued as ROWs or as communication use leases under FLPMA, per 43 CFR 2800 and 2920. Emphasis would be placed on consolidating single facility sites into more efficient communication facilities through site development plans.

There are three existing communication sites in the Planning Area:

- Dunes Vista Communication Site
- Dunebuggy Flats Communication Site
- Ogilby Communication Site

See Map 2-28 for the locations of existing communication sites.

Goals and Objectives

- When practicable, consolidate future proposed facilities within existing communication sites, consistent with management proscriptions in Table 2-21.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Ensure any application for proposed facilities at existing communication sites is compatible with other uses at the site existing at the time of application.

Management Actions by Alternatives

- Under Alternatives 1 through 4, no additional communications sites would be considered beyond the existing three sites.

- Under Alternatives 5 through 8, consider applications for new communication sites outside the three existing sites on a case-by-case basis emphasizing co-location and subleasing of facilities, consistent with management proscriptions shown in Table 2-21 above.

2.3.17.2.4 Renewable Energy (Solar and Wind)

This section addresses renewable energy development not discussed in the Minerals section. The potential for renewable (solar and wind) energy in the Planning Area is based on environmental, physical, economic, and social criteria, in conjunction with policy directives. BLM's general policy is to facilitate environmentally responsible commercial development of solar-energy projects on public lands and use solar energy systems on BLM facilities where feasible.

Statutes and regulations applicable to wind energy development on public lands in the Planning Area include FLPMA and 43 CFR 2800. As stated in EO 13212, an energy project streamlining process requires expediting production, transportation, and conservation of energy.

Wind-energy projects would comply with Instruction Memorandum (IM) 2009-043, the Wind Energy Development Policy, and BMP outlined in Attachment A in the Wind Energy Development Program ROD (BLM 2005c), and the FPEIS on Wind Energy Development on BLM-administered Lands in the Western United States (BLM 2005b) is tiered to and thereby incorporated by reference.

The BLM would strive to increase and diversify our nation's sources of both traditional and alternative energy resources, improve our energy transportation network, and ensure sound environmental management in accordance with the President's National Energy Policy (National Energy Policy Development Group 2001).

Regulations and policy applicable to solar arrays on public lands in the Planning Area include FLPMA, 43 CFR 2800, IM 2011-003 Solar Energy Development Policy, subsequent BLM policies for both solar and wind energy development, and IMs 2011-059 through 2011-061.

Additionally, DOD entities in the State of California requested that the BLM provide them with early notification of proposed renewable energy development on public lands. The objective of this early coordination is to provide an opportunity for the DOD to coordinate and consult with the BLM to inform BLM of DOD's concerns with the proposed renewable energy development project as it may relate to current and future military training missions including: military operating areas, military training routes, air space, and ground access.

For proposed renewable energy development, it is critical that this notification and coordination occur at the earliest possible stage (e.g., when permits for wind testing are being considered by BLM). Early coordination can help identify proposed wind energy projects which may impact current and future military operations before an applicant invests large amounts of money or time in a project. Early involvement by the military would also alert an applicant to a project posing a challenge to military operations and mission. It would also help to identify changes in a proposed project and/or mitigation which would minimize impacts to current and future military operations. Changes may include reducing the number of wind turbines proposed for the area or relocating proposed individual wind turbines or solar power towers to minimize interference with military training routes.

Concurrent with this planning effort, two large-scale renewable energy plans are underway—the BLM and Department of Energy's Solar PEIS (final EIS released in July 2012) and the Renewable Energy Action Team's (REAT) Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP). These planning efforts may result in decisions that amend the CDCA Plan in the Planning Area. If the PEIS or the DRECP are completed before the ROD is signed for this RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment, the RAMP/CDCA Plan Amendment will be consistent with the PEIS and DRECP decisions. The Preferred Alternative excludes some areas from solar energy development where those areas are bordered by exclusion areas in the Solar PEIS.

Goals and Objectives

- Provide for the production and distribution of renewable energy, consistent with management of the recreation area and prescriptions in Table 2-21 above.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Make land available for renewable energy development consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and policy and in accordance with the approved land use and planning decisions.

- Use BLM Wind Energy Development Program Policies and BMP established in Attachment A of the ROD (BLM 2005c) for all site-specific wind development

projects. This policy would also be used as guidance for other renewable (e.g., solar) development projects, until such time as specific program guidance is developed.

- Use State of California *Best Management Practices and Guidance Manual: Desert Renewable Energy Projects*, for development of renewable energy projects in the Planning Area. The BLM and other REAT agencies authored the manual. The BLM may modify these BMPs as necessary over time.

Management Actions by Alternative

Lands available (acres) for solar and wind energy development by alternative are described in Tables 2-22 through 2-23 and in Maps 2-29 through 2-36. Table 2-16 above provides the acreages of lands available for potential geothermal minerals leasing by alternatives. See Appendix H for a comparison by alternative of lands available for geothermal, solar, and wind energy development.

TABLE 2-22
LAND AVAILABLE FOR SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT BY ALTERNATIVE (ACRES)

	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Available	188,832	188,832	47,131	39,694	39,694	39,694	188,832	27,606
Avoidance	0	0	0	144,290	144,290	144,290	0	0
Excluded	0	0	141,702	4,847	4,847	4,847	0	161,226
Total	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832

Note: Inconsistencies in acres may be due to GIS data and rounding.

TABLE 2-23
LAND AVAILABLE FOR WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT BY ALTERNATIVE (ACRES)

	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Available	188,832	188,832	47,131	39,694	39,694	39,694	188,832	35,115
Avoidance	0	0	0	144,290	144,290	144,290	0	0
Excluded	0	0	141,702	4,847	4,847	4,847	0	153,717
Total	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832	188,832

Note: Inconsistencies in acres may be due to GIS data and rounding.

2.3.17.3 Withdrawals

A withdrawal removes an area of federal land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under some or all of the general land laws, for the purpose of limiting activities under those laws to maintain other public values in the area or reserving the area for a particular public purpose or program. Withdrawals are also used to transfer jurisdiction over an area of federal land from one department, bureau, or agency to another.

2.3.17.3.1 Land Withdrawn, Current and Proposed

Goals and Objectives

- Protect sensitive or significant natural, biological, and cultural resource and/or recreational values from disturbances relating to locatable mineral entry.

Management Actions

- Seek revocation of existing withdrawals, if the land is no longer needed for the original purpose of the withdrawal.

- Continue periodic review of existing withdrawals, including other agency withdrawals, to ensure that the reasons for the withdrawal are still valid and that only the acreage needed is retained in withdrawn status.

2.3.17.4 Utility Corridors

To minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs, the utilization of utility corridors would be required to the extent practical and each ROW would reserve to BLM the right to grant additional ROWs or permits for compatible uses on or adjacent to ROWs granted pursuant to FLPMA. In designating utility corridors and in determining whether to require that ROWs be confined to them, BLM would take into consideration national and state land-use policies, environmental quality, economic efficiency, national security, safety, and good engineering and technological practices.

2.3.17.4.1 Goals and Objectives

- Consolidation of major ROWs within the approved corridor to minimize resource impacts.

- The designated corridors would be the preferred location for major utility ROWs consistent with the CDCA Plan, as amended.

2.3.17.4.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Continue the existing three utility corridors (one is a contingency corridor). There is one 2-mile-wide existing utility corridor along I-8 on BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area. A second utility corridor begins in the northernmost portion of the Planning Area near Mammoth Wash and runs north (see Map 2-28). The contingency corridor travels along the eastern boundary of the Planning Area adjacent to the UPRR tracks (Map 2-28).

- Locate all new major utility ROWs (consisting of the following types) within the designated corridors: 1) new electrical transmission towers and cables of 161

kilovolts (kVs) or above; 2) all pipelines with diameters greater than 12 inches; 3) coaxial cables for interstate communications; and (4) major aqueducts or canals for interbasin transfers of water.

- Avoid special designation areas and environmentally sensitive areas, where practical.

2.3.18 Public Health and Safety

According to applicable federal and state laws and regulations, BLM would identify areas or hazards which have a potential impact to public health and safety.

The following are public health and safety concerns in the Planning Area:

- Human health and safety and law enforcement
- International border issues
- Unexploded ordnance (UXO)
- Hazardous materials
- Noise

The CDCA Plan does not set out specific goals for public health and safety and management of hazardous materials. BLM's stated policy is to reduce threats to public health, safety, and property. In accordance with the FLPMA, BLM is required to comply with state standards for public health and safety. Additionally, the CDCA Plan multiple-use classifications do not allow hazardous or non-hazardous waste disposal sites on public lands, except where landfills are suitable. The public lands may be transferred to the appropriate owner/operator.

2.3.18.1 Human Health and Safety and Law Enforcement

Federal regulation Title 43 CFR Part 8340.0-2 directs BLM to protect the resources of public lands, to promote the safety of all users of those lands, and to minimize conflicts among the various users of those lands. Both the BLM and visitors to the Planning Area are concerned about compliance with laws and regulations and current law enforcement issues. Increasing visitor populations during the OHV-recreation season create large crowds and congestion throughout the Planning Area. During the high visitation holiday periods, there is a need to increase the level of enforcement to maintain the quality of the recreational experience currently enjoyed by the majority of the visiting public. The BLM will continue to promote public health and safety throughout the Planning Area.

2.3.18.1.1 Goals and Objectives

- Work cooperatively with the county, the contracted emergency medical service providers, and other interested agencies, to find innovative methods of providing the highest level of emergency medical service needed to adequately serve visitors to the Planning Area, as needs fluctuate.
- Provide adequate basic life support training to the ISD SRMA staff as a minimum level of emergency medical service.
- Improve the health and safety of visitors, employees, and nearby residents by working with local, state, and federal agencies and interest groups.
- Promote safety through education about the rules and regulations within the Planning Area.
- Promote safety through law enforcement activities to improve compliance with the rules and regulations of the Planning Area.
- Improve health by addressing the air quality around established roads with the management of dust and particulates through stabilization and/or reduction in accumulation, as appropriate and practical, and the enforcement of speed limitations.
- Provide education to encourage compliance with the rules about camping-related issues such as disposal of trash and wastewater.
- Reduce OHV-related accidents and injuries. Provide education concerning the rules and regulations relating to OHV use within the Planning Area.
- Increase compliance with all laws and regulations.

2.3.18.1.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Work cooperatively with the county, contracted emergency medical service providers, and other partners to find innovative methods of providing the highest level of emergency medical service needed to adequately serve the visitors of the Planning Area, as needs fluctuate.
- Provide emergency medical technician training to the permanent visitor services staff as a minimum level of emergency medical service.
- Provide adequate off-highway emergency medical service support to the county and visitors throughout the Planning Area.
- Maintain and enhance cooperation between law enforcement entities having jurisdictional authority within the Planning Area. Enforce existing rules and

regulations to facilitate a safe visitor experience. Manage OHV destination areas to provide safety for the OHV recreationists and agency personnel.

- Provide for adequate law enforcement and visitor services (emergency medical technicians).
- Maintain law enforcement coalition and cooperate with local agencies.

2.3.18.2 International Border Issues

The BLM manages approximately 11 miles of public land along the U.S.–Mexico border within the Planning Area. Along the U.S.–Mexico border there are incidences of undocumented immigrant traffic and other criminal activity.

2.3.18.2.1 Goals and Objectives

- Ensure that public lands adjacent to the U.S.–Mexico border are safe for public and agency use.

2.3.18.2.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Coordinate with USBP to minimize impacts to resources in emergency situations, where greater access may be required.
- Educate visitors about border safety through continued partnerships.

2.3.18.2.3 Management Actions by Alternative

U.S.–Mexico border area access by alternative is described in Table 2-24 below.

TABLE 2-24
U.S.–MEXICO BORDER ACCESS BY ALTERNATIVE

Management Actions	Alternative							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Maintain area adjacent to the U.S.–Mexico border as open to public use and continue voluntary compliance through public education and cooperation with USBP to enhance public safety.	X	X					X	X
Prohibit public use of the area within 100 feet of the U.S.–Mexico border.			X					
Prohibit public use of the Roosevelt Reservation area (60 feet) adjacent to the U.S.–Mexico border.				X	X	X		

2.3.18.3 Unexploded Ordnance

UXO consists of military materials used in tests and on training ranges. UXO may include but is not limited to bombs, mortars, artillery shells, rockets, submunitions, and landmines.

Two sources of risk exist at UXO sites: 1) risks from explosions and 2) risks from munition constituents (materials originating from UXO or other munitions, including the chemical constituents that result from their breakdown) that have leached into soil and water.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is responsible for investigating and mitigating environmental impacts related to past military use at these types of facilities.

Given the number of aircraft used on the various military facilities in the vicinity of the Planning Area, it is possible that a military aircraft could crash or miss targets in the live ranges and be a source of UXO.

2.3.18.3.1 Goals and Objectives

- Promote public and/or environmental safety from UXO and related hazardous materials.

2.3.18.3.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Identify the locations on BLM-administered lands that are potential areas of UXO concern in cooperation with the USACE.
- Report UXO to the proper authorities for disposal as they are found.

2.3.18.4 Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials consist of chemicals and materials that have the potential to adversely impact human health and the environment. In the Planning Area, hazardous materials could include but are not limited to petroleum products, industrial chemicals, acids, heavy metals, lead-based paint, and asbestos-containing materials. Potential sources of hazardous materials include abandoned mines, mining mill sites, landfills, illegal dumping (including sewage), leaking fuel tanks, illegal drug manufacturing sites, abandoned buildings, and other sites.

Illegal dumping has a potential to cause environmental impacts to BLM-administered land within the Planning Area. Chemical leachate from these sites has the potential to contaminate soil and reach surface and/or groundwater.

Laws governing the management of these materials include Comprehensive Environmental Recovery, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA), other federal laws and regulations, and state and local regulations. Mining and milling wastes are managed under CERCLA as potentially hazardous materials or hazardous waste.

2.3.18.4.1 Goals and Objectives

- Minimize the presence and potential impact to human health and the environment from hazardous materials.

2.3.18.4.2 Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Perform public notification of potential health risks by means of notices, signage, and other forms of communication.
- Remediate areas contaminated with hazardous materials in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.